NEW MEDIA ANALYSIS: THE EFFECTS OF PEER INFLUENCE AND PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS THROUGH THE STAGES OF TRIAL, ADOPTION, AND CONTINUED USE OF VIDEO SHARING WEBSITES

THESIS

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AFIT/GIR/ENV/11-M02

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Abstract

New Media technologies have evolved at a rapid pace and have changed the way people communicate in the digital world. These changes are apparent in practically every type of application, including business, leisure, and the way people socially interact. The primary goal of this research was to contribute to the current breadth of knowledge and understanding regarding how, why, and under what conditions people interact with New Media technologies. In order to achieve this objective, this research provides an understanding of how peer influence and individual personality characteristics interact across time through the stages of New Media trial, adoption, and continued use of video sharing websites.

The research methodology involved the collection of quantitative data from 63 university students. Three instruments were used to collect data: self-reported screener survey, semi-structured interview with quantitative items, and a personality survey. A conditional growth model was used to test six hypotheses proposed by this study. The results of these hypotheses revealed that peer influence is in fact moderated by personality characteristics across time through the stages of New Media trial, adoption, and continued use. This research provides a foundation in which to build upon and presents several opportunities for future research.

For my wife and children

Acknowledgments

As this thesis endeavor comes to its conclusion, I have many people to thank. First, I would like to express my utmost appreciation and thanks to my thesis committee. To my advisor, thank you for your guidance, support, inspiration, and mentorship throughout this entire thesis process. To my readers, thank you for your help in the planning and execution of this study's data collect. I sincerely appreciate you opening up your university and allowing me the opportunity to take part in such dynamic research. Also, I want to thank you for your thoughtful commentary both in the classes you taught and during this research experience, your effort shows how much you care. To my fellow classmates in the GIR program, I have truly learned more from you than any book or journal article I have read here. Your support and humor have made the "AFIT Experience" a great one.

Unfortunately, my family deserves more credit than I could possibly say here, but I must try… Mom, thanks for always supporting my dreams and believing in me. You have made me a better man through your personal wisdom and unconditional love. To my sister, you are my best friend and have always been my rock. Most importantly I need to thank my beautiful wife and four children… the unwavering love, understanding, and support you show me are astounding. Being able to share my life with you is the greatest gift of all. To God, our father, thank you for demonstrating your love through these wonderful people who have helped me through this time.

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NEW MEDIA ANALYSIS: THE EFFECTS OF PEER INFLUENCE AND PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS THROUGH THE STAGES OF TRIAL, ADOPTION, AND CONTINUED USE OF VIDEO SHARING WEBSITES

I. Introduction

Internet based New Media technologies have evolved at a rapid pace and have changed the way people communicate in the digital world. These changes are apparent in practically every type of application, including business, leisure, and the way people socially interact with each other. As New Media technologies emerge, understanding why individuals are drawn to certain technologies and how those technologies are being used in their daily lives is becoming increasingly more important.

There is a wealth of theoretical research available concerning individual technology acceptance and user behavior. These theories range from social psychology models incorporating technology user's behavioral intentions and attitudes (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), to theories of innovation diffusion, which describe the dissemination of various innovations across a network (Rogers, 2003). However, there is a fundamental gap in existing literature regarding the impact of peer influence and individual personality characteristics associated with users of New Media technologies across time. In order to take advantage of these new systems and technologies, we need a better understanding of how, why, and under what conditions these technologies cause people to become influenced over time. The present research attempts to provide an understanding of how peer influence and personality characteristics interact across time as individual's progress through the stages of New Media trial, adoption, and continued use.

New Media Background

New Media technology is defined as "any of several forms of evolving presentations that make use of technology and interactivity" (Bennett, 2005, p. 337). New Media is comprised of three distinct components. The first element of New Media is the actual artifact or device that individuals use to communicate and convey information with each other. The activities and practices used to communicate that information constitutes the second element of New Media. The final element of New Media utilizes both the devices and practices to develop social arrangements and forums (Lievrouw & Livingstone, 2006). New Media technologies have erupted with the emergence of Web 2.0 and include the following categories of technologies: weblogs (e.g. blogs), social networking websites (e.g. "My Space" or "Facebook"), personal web sites (e.g. "eHarmony"), video/picture sharing sites (e.g. "YouTube"), podcasts, and viral games (e.g. "World of Warcraft"). Each of these New Media technologies provide a social arrangement and forum for people to interact with each other based on their choice and preference.

New Media technologies are essentially byproducts of Web 2.0 technology. The term Web 2.0 was coined by Tim O'Reilly in 2004 as the second phase of Web evolution in which the World Wide Web shifted from a read-only medium to a two-way read and write medium. Web 2.0 is also synonymous with the terms wisdom web, people centric web, and participative web (Pattel, Yuan, & Jianqiu, 2009). New Media technologies utilize Web 2.0 technology by allowing users to interact with each other as contributors to the website's content through interactive information sharing and collaboration.

While a precise definition for Web 2.0 is often difficult to pinpoint, O'Reilly (2005) defines Web 2.0 as follows:

> Web 2.0 is the network as platform, spanning all connected devices; Web 2.0 applications are those that make the most of the intrinsic advantages of that platform: delivering software as a continually updated service that gets better the more people use it, consuming and remixing data from multiple sources, including individual users, while providing their own data and services in a form that allows remixing by others, creating network effects through an architecture of participation, and going beyond the page metaphor of Web 1.0 to deliver rich user experiences. (O'Reilly, 2005)

Some of the key attributes associated with New Media/Web 2.0 technologies include the growth of social networks, bi-directional communications, and diverse types of content. "Web 2.0 is both a platform on which innovative technologies have been built and a space where users are treated as first class objects" (Cormode & Krishnamurthy, 2008, p. 2). According to Pattal, Yuan, and Jianqiu (2009), the most popular Web 2.0 applications include social networking and information sharing sites such as MySpace, Facebook, Flickr, Twitter, Wikipedia, Blogs, YouTube, and Google (Pattel, Yuan, & Jianqiu, 2009).

The rapid increase in digital technology and the advent of Web 2.0 related sites has dramatically increased Internet traffic and subsequently the use of New Media technologies. For example, Pattel, Yuan, and Jianqiu (2009) states that, "Presently the number of Internet users has escalated to 1.6 billion (i.e. 23.8% of the world's population) compared to 16 million in 1995 or 0.4% of the world's population" (p. 125).

New Media technologies are exemplified by creations of video sharing and social networking sites where collections of friends can collaborate, socialize, and share text, audio, and video content. These innovations have had a phenomenal influence in the way millions of people communicate and socialize with each other. According to Thompson (2007), "these sites allow members to create their own Web pages, complete with personal profiles, descriptions of interests, photos, videos, blogs, and a growing array of other features that help members connect with others having similar interests" (p. 3).

While there are many types of New Media innovations available on the Internet, this study focuses specifically on the video sharing technology, YouTube. Prior to the onset of Web 2.0 technologies, Internet based video sharing was historically created and supplied by a limited number of media producers. The advent of Web 2.0 technology brought about user-generated content (UGC), which has dramatically reshaped the online video market by allowing millions of video producers and consumers to share videos (Cheng, Dale, & Liu, 2007).

In 2005, YouTube exploded in popularity and quickly became the world's largest UGC video sharing website. As the most successful video sharing site on the Internet, YouTube features over 40 million videos, which are accessed by approximately 20 million visitors each month. Since its inception, YouTube has become one of the fastest growing websites on the Internet and currently comprises approximately 20% of all HTTP traffic, or nearly 10% of all traffic on the Internet (Cheng, Dale, & Liu, 2007).

Purpose and Significance of the Study

The purpose of this research is to add to the Air Force's current breadth of knowledge and understanding regarding the humanistic factors that influence individual use of New Media technologies over time. In order to meet this objective, this study provides a longitudinal analysis of how peer influence and personality characteristics interact across time as individual's progress through the stages of trial, adoption, and continued use. New Media technologies are maturing at a staggering rate and include a plethora of diverse users. These newer technologies have become embedded in modern life because they are becoming easier to operate, are more interactive (between human and machine), they enable globalized communications, and are very inexpensive, if not free, to use. Additionally, New Media technologies solicit a larger audience than ever recorded by any medium and can almost instantly span complex boundaries (e.g., geographical, political, organizational, economic, social, and educational) (Clavette et. al, 2009).

Military Implications

The military implications of this research are compelling because the Internet is being used as a weapon by terrorists and radical organizations around the world. For over a decade the United States has continuously fought wars on multiple fronts, one of which is the information front. This information front is described in *Social Media and the Air Force* (2009) as follows:

> Information is an instrument of national power and has complex components with no single center of control. Information itself is a strategic resource vital to national security interest and allows communicators to shape the information battlefield. (Clavette et al., 2009, p. 2)

The Internet is a fluid and dynamic space with many factors shaping media, messages, and products. New Media technologies allow for the social interaction between messenger and receiver. The following diagram (Figure 1) depicts the Air Force's view of how New Media products are possibly influenced by multiple factors, both from individuals and mass media (Clavette et al., 2009).

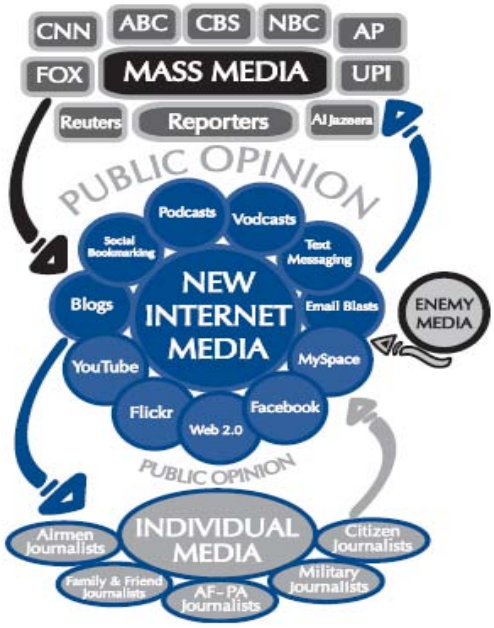

Figure 1. Global New Media Information Flow (Clavette et al., 2009)

The social aspect of New Media innovations such as YouTube provides a link for individuals to form a worldwide network based on choice and preference. New Media technologies allow messages to spread far greater than initially intended because tools like blogs, YouTube, and Facebook provide instantaneous communication with audiences around the world. Additionally, these technologies provide a platform for small groups or individuals to quickly build or reconstitute a terrorist organization (Clavette et al., 2009).

According to a 2008 survey from Internet World Stats, since 2000, Internet usage has jumped in the Middle East by 1,296 percent, with Syria and Iran garnering the highest Internet growth usage at 11,466 percent and 9,100 percent respectively (Clavette et al., 2009). Media outlets in non-democratic areas of the world, such as *Al Jazeera*, are now employing New Media technologies such as blogs and video sharing to disseminate news content. There is a mass movement to new and emerging Internet technologies by the mainstream media, the American public, and the military. However, insurgents and terrorists using New Media technologies continue to infiltrate these resources to counter our messages, intelligence, and communications on a global scale (Clavette et al., 2009).

In an effort to counter adversaries of the United States, the Air Force has initiated an aggressive campaign focused at training and informing Airmen with the knowledge necessary to maneuver in the online information battlespace. According to Clavette et al. (2009), "The Air Force needs to turn all of its Airmen into communicators who combat negative influence of enemy propaganda, misinformation, and misrepresentation" (p. 5). This study compliments Air Force objectives by providing a foundational understanding of the humanistic factors that propel individuals through the stages of New Media trial, adoption, and continued use.

Problem to be Investigated

New Media technology is still in its infancy stages of development; therefore, little empirically validated research to date has attempted to explain the intrinsic personality characteristics associated with New Media trial, adoption, and continued use. The primary goal of this research is to develop an increased understanding of how peer influence is moderated by personality characteristics across time as individual's progress through the stages of New Media trial, adoption, and continued use.

In order to achieve this goal and help fill the gap in existing New Media research, the following research question was developed: *To what degree does peer influence interact with the personality characteristics of individuals as it relates to New Media trial, adoption, and continued use across time?* In order to gain the insight necessary to answer this overarching research question, this thesis will focus on the following two core investigative questions:

(1) What role does peer influence have on individual trial, adoption, and continued use of New Media technologies?

(2) What are the significant personality characteristics that influence individuals to try, adopt, and continue to use New Media technologies?

The impact of this study has the potential to break new ground in the realm of New Media research by providing the insight necessary for determining how, why, and under what conditions individual's become influenced over time through the stages of New Media. By doing so, this study can be used as a foundation for determining how New Media technologies can be leveraged to disseminate a more agreeable message to our cause, help form the basis for security and denial capabilities, and keep those who are now able to easily broadcast messages of hate, violence, and intolerance from doing so.

Approach

This study uses a quantitative research methodology. Quantitative research is defined as any type of research that produces results and/or findings in mathematical terms that arrive via statistical analysis or any other form of quantification (Bordens & Abbott, 2005). This quantitative research study was accomplished through the analysis of data, which consisted of 63 semi-structured interviews. An interview guide was used to conduct each interview session and was designed using a 7-point Likert-scale for each quantitative question. Upon the completion of each interview session, the respondent then filled out a brief personality survey for inclusion in the quantitative analysis. The data received from the interviews and surveys, along with an extensive literature review, led to some preliminary insight regarding the intrinsic personality characteristics associated with New Media trial, adoption, and continued use.

Scope

The groundwork for this research was derived from a 2007 Michigan State University (MSU) study titled *A Qualitative Investigation of the Influence of New Media Technologies and Viral Marketing Efforts*. This study consisted of 80 in-depth interviews of young adults (age 18-25) to determine their use of New Media technology. The driving force behind the MSU study was to develop an understanding of the radical changes in the way that young adults gather and share information. The present research effort attempts to complement the MSU study and to further expand the body of knowledge pertaining to how/why individuals try, adopt, and continue to use New Media technologies.

Thesis Overview

The topics discussed in this chapter included the background, purpose and significance of the study, problem to be investigated, approach, and scope of this research. The next chapter (chapter 2) provides an extensive literature review of pre-existing research theories/models related to New Media trial, adoption, and continued use. Additionally, a review was conducted of the relevant literature pertaining to peer influence and the personality characteristics examined in this study. Based on this literature review, a total of six hypotheses were developed regarding New Media trial, adoption, and continued use. Chapter 3 discusses the research design, data collection, instruments, and measures that formulate the methodology used in this study. Chapter 4 examines the quantitative data acquired from the data collect with emphasis on the statistical significance of the findings for the hypotheses proposed in this study. Finally, chapter 5 provides a discussion of the findings, limitations, opportunities for future research, potential benefits, and a general overview of this thesis.

II. Literature Review

Overview

Past research has focused largely on the broad topics of information systems (IS) and information technology (IT) acceptance; however, no research to date has examined the impact of peer influence and personality characteristics across time regarding the trial, adoption, and continued use of New Media technologies. Historically, IT focused research has only considered a static view of the determinant variables regarding the use of IT systems and has ignored the potential change in factors over the lifecycle of the system throughout time (Davis, 1989; Moore & Benbasat, 1991). The primary purpose of this literature review is to assess the current state of knowledge with respect to individual user acceptance of information technologies and intrinsic human personality characteristics in hopes of understanding how and why individuals become influenced across time through the stages of New Media trial, adoption, and continued use.

This chapter first examines the background and definition of key terms associated with this research. Next, eight prominent theoretical IT acceptance models will be discussed in an effort to explore and leverage their applicability and/or relevance to New Media trial, adoption, and continued use. Finally, a thorough review of the significant personality characteristics identified in this study will be presented along with six hypotheses based on a culmination of the IT acceptance models/theories and individual personality characteristics examined in this study.

Background

New Media technologies have revolutionized communications in the digital world by allowing both small and large groups of people to congregate, share, sell, and swap goods and information online. This technology has also provided a forum for people to have a voice in their communities and the world at large. In order to take advantage of these new systems and technologies, a better understanding of how, why, and under what conditions these technologies influence people is needed. This study attempts to answer these questions by examining the relevant literature associated with individual user acceptance of information technologies and the personality characteristics that influence individuals across time through the stages of New Media trial, adoption, and continued use.

Key Terms/Definitions

This section addresses the differences between the longitudinal stages of trial, adoption, and continued use in relation to New Media technologies. Current literature in the IS/IT domain has failed to define and discriminate between these stages; therefore, due to its widespread acceptance in academia, the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary will be used to define try, adopt, and use for the purpose of this study.

Try is defined as, "to put to test or trial, to examine or investigate judicially" (Merriam-Webster, 2011). In the context of New Media, the trial stage refers to the period in time when an individual begins to experiment with and explore a new technology. Therefore, the term try or trial hereby refers to an individual testing, trying, or attempting to use New Media technologies in order to find out about them.

Adopt is defined as, “to take up and practice, to accept formally and put into effect” (Merriam-Webster, 2011). In the context of New Media, the adoption stage refers to a period in time when an individual formally accepts a technology based on the innate value they observed during the trial stage. Therefore, the term adopt or adoption hereby refers to an individual’s act of accepting New Media technologies with wide personal approval.

Use is defined as, “the act or practice of employing something, to accept formally and put into effect, routine or customary usage” (Merriam-Webster, 2011). In the context of New Media, the continued use stage refers to a period in time when an individual begins to use a technology as an integral part of their daily routine. Therefore, the term use or continued use hereby represents the act of using a New Media technology as an accepted or habitual practice.

Theoretical Foundation

New Media technology is still in its infancy stages of development; therefore, little empirically validated research to date has attempted to explain the intrinsic human characteristics associated with New Media trial, adoption, and continued use. Due to the lack of preexisting New Media research available, the theoretical underpinnings of this study are indicated by several diverse lines of research associated with individual acceptance and use of information systems and information technology. The foundation for this study was derived from an article by Venkatesh et al. (2003). This seminal article focuses on the assessment of eight prominent theories/models of IT acceptance research in order to develop a Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT).

The eight theories and models discussed in UTAUT include the Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), the Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1986), the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), the Model of PC Utilization (Thompson, Higgins, & Howell, 1991), the Innovation Diffusion Theory (Rogers, 2003), the Motivational Model (Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1992), a model combining the Technology Acceptance Model and the Theory of Planned Behavior (Taylor & Todd, 1995), and the Social Cognitive Theory (Compeau, Higgins, & Huff, 1999).

The motivation behind the development of UTAUT was to unify and empirically compare preexisting IT acceptance research models and their associated acceptance determinants in order to assess the success likelihood of new technology introductions. This framework provides a useful tool to help both academics and practitioners understand the drivers of technology acceptance in order to proactively design interventions targeted at populations of users that may be less inclined to try, adopt, and continue to use information systems and information technologies. In order to develop a basic conceptual framework, UTAUT employs usage as the key dependent variable and intention as the predictor of behavior (i.e. usage). Figure 2 presents the basic concepts underlying the eight user acceptance models discussed throughout the following sub-sections of this chapter (Venkatesh et al., 2003).

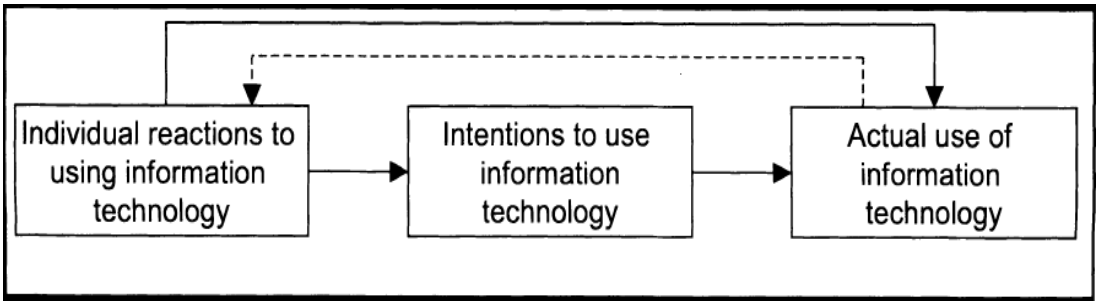

Figure 2. Basic Concept Underlying User Acceptance Models

IT Acceptance Theories/Models Related to Trial

Information systems (IS) and information technology (IT) research has long studied the internal, social, and product-specific factors that influence individuals to try new information technologies. Within this broad area of inquiry, there have been several streams of research. This section examines the Model of PC Utilization (MPCU), Motivational Model (MM), and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) in order to provide an understanding of the factors that influence individuals to initially try a new system. The constructs examined in these theories specifically relate to the initial conditions that surround individuals prior to trying a new system, also known as pre-system interaction, and include the personal factors that motivate or discourage individuals to try a new system or technology. The following theories lay the groundwork for answering the question: Why do individuals try New Media technologies?

Model of PC Utilization

The Model of PC Utilization (MPCU) was derived from Triandis' (1977; 1980) Theory of Human Behavior (THB). MPCU refined Triandis' THB model to include an IT context for predicting PC utilization and individual acceptance and use of information technologies. This model relates to the trial of information technologies by examining the relative influence of the following core constructs: Job-Fit, Complexity, Long-Term Consequences, Affect Toward Use, Social Factors, and Facilitating Conditions of Behavior. These constructs are defined below in Table 1.

Table 1. Model of PC Utilization
(Derived from Venkatesh et al., 2003)

Model of PC Utilization (MPCU)	
Core Constructs	**Definitions**
Job-Fit with PC Use	"The extent to which an individual believes that using a technology can enhance the performance of his or her job" (Thompson et al., 1991, p. 129).
Complexity of PC Use	"The degree to which an innovation is perceived as relatively difficult to understand and use" (Thompson et al., 1991, p. 128).
Long-Term Consequences of PC Use	"Outcomes that have a pay-off in the future" (Thompson et al., 1991, p. 129).
Affect Toward PC Use	"Feelings of joy, elation or pleasure, or depression, disgust, displeasure or hate associated by an individual with a particular act" (Thompson et al., 1991, p. 127).
Social Factors Influencing PC Use	"The individual's internalization of the reference group's subjective culture, and specific interpersonal agreements that the individual has made with others, in specific social situations" (Thompson et al., 1991, p. 126).
Facilitating Conditions for PC Use	"Provision of support for users of PCs may be one type of facilitating condition that can influence system utilization" (Thompson et al., 1991, p. 126).

The constructs presented in MPCU are initial conditions of pre-system interaction and are directly related to the personal factors that influence individual's to try new technologies. For example, if individuals believe that a system isn't capable of producing long-term benefits (Long-Term Consequences) to their overall job performance (Job-Fit) or they perceive the system as difficult to use (Complexity); they may be less inclined to try the system. Affect Toward Use refers to an individual's positive or negative emotional state regarding the system and plays an integral role in determining the

predictability of an individual to try the system (Thompson, Higgins, & Howell, 1991). Individuals may also be influenced to try a system based on the Social Factors and norms observed within their peer groups. Facilitating Conditions refers to the environmental factors that make a system easier for an individual to use. For example, the use of a computer word-processor to type a lengthy document may facilitate the trial of a system if the alternative is to handwrite the document (Thompson, Higgins, & Howell, 1991).

The results of MPCU posit that social factors and three components of expected consequences (complexity of use, fit between the job and PC capabilities, and long-term consequences) have a strong influence on the trial and subsequent utilization of PC technology (Thompson, Higgins, & Howell, 1991). Figure 3 presents the theoretical model developed by the MPCU.

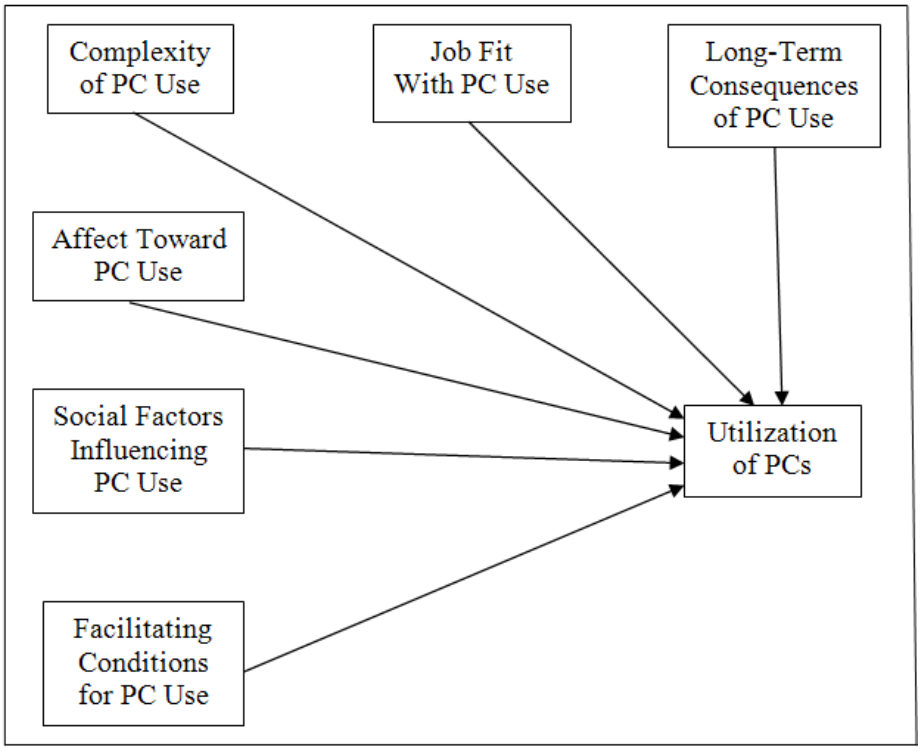

Figure 3. Factors Influencing the Utilization of Personal Computers (Derived from Thompson, Higgins, & Howell, 1991)

Motivational Model

The Motivational Model (MM) applies motivational theory to also understand new technology trial within the information systems domain. The core constructs examined in this theory includes the effect of Extrinsic Motivation and Intrinsic Motivation on behavioral intention (Davis, Bagozzi, and Warshaw, 1992). These constructs are defined below in Table 2.

Table 2. Motivational Model
(Derived from Venkatesh et al., 2003)

Motivational Model (MM)	
Core Constructs	**Definitions**
Extrinsic Motivation	"The perception that users will want to perform an activity because it is perceived to be instrumental in achieving valued outcomes that are distinct from the activity itself, such as improved job performance, pay, or promotions" (Davis et al. 1992, p. 1112).
Intrinsic Motivation	"The perception that users will want to perform an activity for no apparent reinforcement other than the process of performing the activity per se" (Davis et al. 1992, p. 1112).

The constructs presented in the MM are initial conditions of pre-system interaction that are directly related to the internal motivations that influence individual's to try new technologies. For example, individuals with high levels of Extrinsic Motivation may openly accept and try a new technology or system if they believe it will significantly benefit them in the pursuit of their goals. This type of motivation has the potential to influence the trial of a new technology even if the individual has a negative perception of the technology (Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1992).

Individuals that are intrinsically motivated tend to try new technologies based on the expected enjoyment of the activity, rather than the expected benefits or rewards that might result (Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1992). New Media technologies are inherently a voluntary form of technological communications; therefore, it is conceivable to say that individuals are more likely to be intrinsically motivated to try a New Media technology such as YouTube, as opposed to an individual that is extrinsically motivated by external factors (Bennet, 2005). Figure 4 presents the theoretical model developed by the MM.

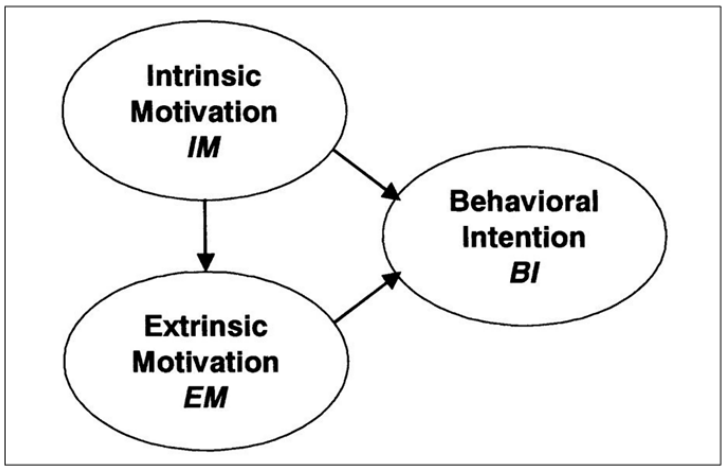

Figure 4. Motivational Model
(Derived from Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1992)

Social Cognitive Theory

The Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) was originally developed by Bandura (1977) as a powerful theoretical model of human behavior. In 1995, Compeau and Higgins expanded upon Bandura's research to design a model to test the influence of Computer Self-Efficacy, Outcome Expectations, Affect, and Anxiety on computer usage (Compeau & Higgins, 1995). The constructs presented in this theory are defined below in Table 3.

Table 3. Social Cognitive Theory and Individual Reactions to Computing Technology (Derived from Venkatesh et al., 2003)

Social Cognitive Theory & Individual Reactions To Computing Technology	
Core Constructs	**Definitions**
Outcome Expectations - Performance	"Outcomes associated with improvements in job performance (efficiency and effectiveness)" (Compeau et al., 1999, p. 147).
Outcome Expectations - Personal	"Expectations of change in image or status or of expectations of rewards, such as promotions, raises, or praise" (Compeau et al., 1999, p. 148)
Self-Efficacy	"An individual's beliefs about his or her capabilities to use computers" Compeau et al., 1999, p. 147).
Affect	"The positive affective responses of individuals… the enjoyment a person derives from using computers" (Compeau et al., 1999, p. 148).
Anxiety	"The negative affective responses of individuals…the feelings of apprehension or anxiety that one experiences when using computers" (Compeau et al., 1999, p. 148).

These constructs are initial conditions of pre-system interaction and are directly related to cognitive factors that influence individual's to try new technologies. The Performance Outcome Expectations construct consists of cognitive factors that influence individuals to try a technology based on their belief that the technology may enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of their day-to-day job performance. The Personal Outcome Expectations construct is similar to the Extrinsic Motivation construct discussed in the Motivational Model in that individual trial of the technology is dependent upon the external benefits that may be observed from using the technology (i.e., rewards, promotions, or praise) (Compeau, Higgins, & Huff, 1999).

A major determinant regarding the initial conditions that influence the trial of a new technology is an individual's perceived level of Computer Self-Efficacy. For example, individual that are highly confident in their computing abilities are more likely to try new technologies. On the other hand, individuals with low levels of Computer Self-Efficacy are more prone to stay within their established comfort zone and tend to avoid the introduction of new technologies (Compeau & Higgins, 1995). Affect and Anxiety embody the positive and negative emotions that individuals observe during the trial stage of a technology. Affect represents the positive emotions or enjoyment that individuals recognize from using computers. In contrast, Anxiety represents the negative emotions or apprehension that individuals experience from using computers. In either case, these characteristics are typically known by the individual before they encounter a new technology (Compeau, Higgins, & Huff, 1999).

In 1999, Compeau, Higgins, and Huff developed a straightforward and widely accepted theory of individual cognitive reactions to computing technology. The results of their technology focused SCT model provide predictive capabilities of self-efficacy and performance related outcome expectations and supply evidence that self-efficacy toward computing can be increased if training and support are available when new technologies are introduced to the organization (Compeau, Higgins, & Huff, 1999). The theoretical model used to guide the Social Cognitive Theory and Individual Reactions to Computing Technology is presented below in Figure 5.

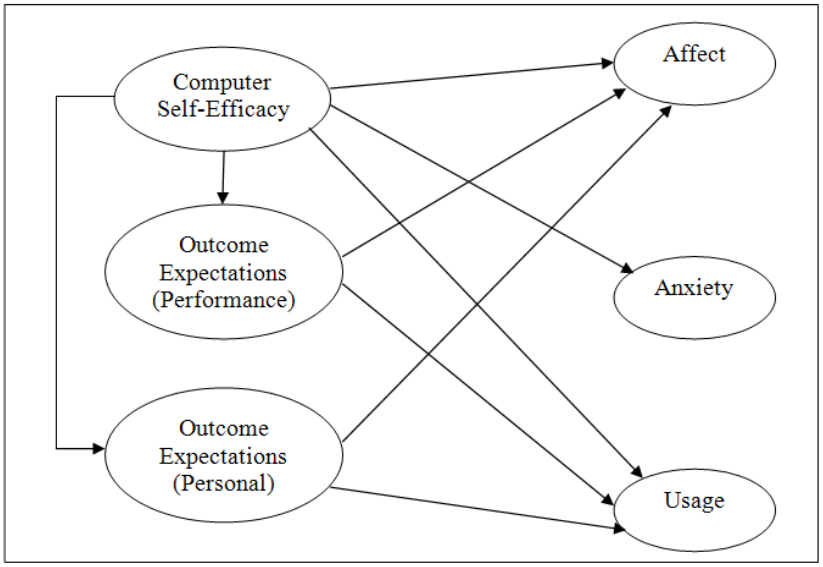

Figure 5. Social Cognitive Theory and Individual Reactions to Computing Technology (Derived from Compeau, Higgins, & Huff, 1999)

IT Acceptance Theories/Models Related to Adoption

The adoption stage of technology, also known as post-system interaction, refers to the period in time when an individual formally accepts a new technology based on the inherent value observed during the trial stage. This section examines the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), and Combined TAM-TPB in order to provide an understanding of the factors that influence individuals to progress from the trial stage of technology acceptance to the adoption stage. The constructs examined in these theories specifically relate to the personal conditions that influence individuals to adopt a new system or technology. The following theories lay the groundwork for answering the question: Why do individuals adopt New Media technologies?

Theory of Reasoned Action

The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) is drawn from social psychology as one of the most important theories of human behavior. TRA is relevant to this research because it explains the human characteristics associated with the adoption of an artifact. The core constructs of this theory consist of Attitude Toward Behavior and Subjective Norm (Ajzen, 1985). The constructs presented in this theory are defined below in Table 4.

Table 4. Theory of Reasoned Action
(Derived from Venkatesh et al., 2003)

Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)	
Core Constructs	**Definitions**
Attitude Toward Behavior	"An individual's positive or negative feelings (evaluation affect) about performing the target behavior" (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975, p. 216).
Subjective Norm	"The person's perception that most people who are important to him think he should or should not perform the behavior in question" (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975, p. 302).

The constructs presented in TRA are personal conditions of post-system interaction and are directly related to behavioral factors that influence individual's to adopt new technologies. For the purpose of this study, Attitude Toward Behavior reflects an individual's positive or negative outlook regarding the adoption of a technology. For example, individuals that evaluate the use of a technology (i.e. YouTube) as being positive may be more inclined to progress from the trial stage to adoption. TRA argues that the probability of performing a given behavior (i.e. adoption of a new technology) will be significantly increased when an individual has a positive attitude toward performing that behavior (Ajzen, 1985).

The Subjective Norm construct represents a form of social normative pressure that leads individuals to believe that they should perform a given task or behavior based on the perception that significant others wants them to perform the behavior. Therefore, if an individual believes that his or her significant others wants them to adopt a new technology, he or she will be more likely to do so. The TRA framework suggests that an individual's attitude toward any object, issue, behavior, or event is determined by his or her salient beliefs linking the object to various attributes and by their evaluations of those attributes (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Ajzen, 1985). Figure 6 represents the theoretical model developed by the TRA.

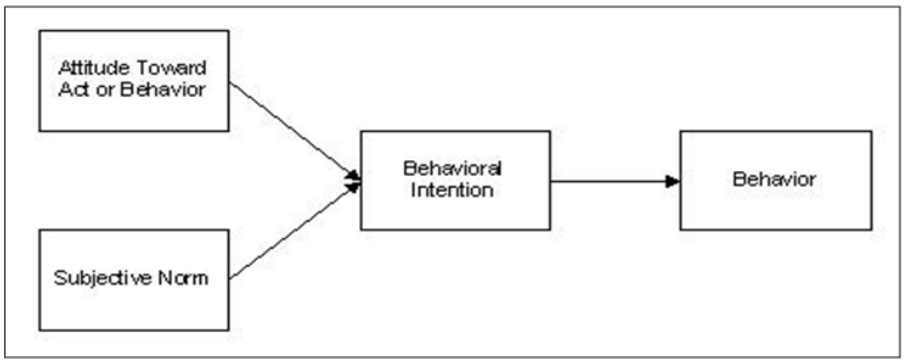

Figure 6. Theory of Reasoned Action
(Derived from Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975)

Technology Acceptance Model

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is an extension of Ajzen and Fishbein's Theory of Reasoned Action (Venkatesh et al., 2003). TAM was developed to explain and predict individual user acceptance and subsequent adoption of information technology on the job by replacing the attitude measures of TRA with two fundamental determinants of user behavior/acceptance: Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use (Davis, 1986). The constructs presented in this model are defined below in Table 5.

Table 5. Technology Acceptance Model
(Derived from Venkatesh et al., 2003)

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)	
Core Constructs	**Definitions**
Perceived Usefulness	"The degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance" (Davis, 1989, p. 320)
Perceived Ease of Use	"The degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort" (Davis, 1989, p. 320).

The constructs presented in TAM are personal conditions of post-system interaction and are directly related to cognitive factors that influence individual's to adopt new technologies. The underlying concept behind Perceived Usefulness is that people will openly invite and accept new technologies that can readily improve their job performance. However, while some individuals may adopt a new technology because they feel it is helpful to do their job (Perceived Usefulness); others may refute the technology because they feel it complicates their work (Perceived Ease of Use). The constructs of Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use are related to the adoption or acceptance stage of a technology because they reflect the cognitive influence or beliefs of the individuals that were obtained during the trial stage. TAM suggests that if individuals don't perceive a technology as useful to their daily routine or easy to use, it will not be accepted voluntarily. In 2000, TAM was extended and designated as TAM2 by including the TRA construct of Subjective Norm as an additional predictor of intention in the case of mandatory settings (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000). Figure 7 represents the theoretical model developed by the TAM.

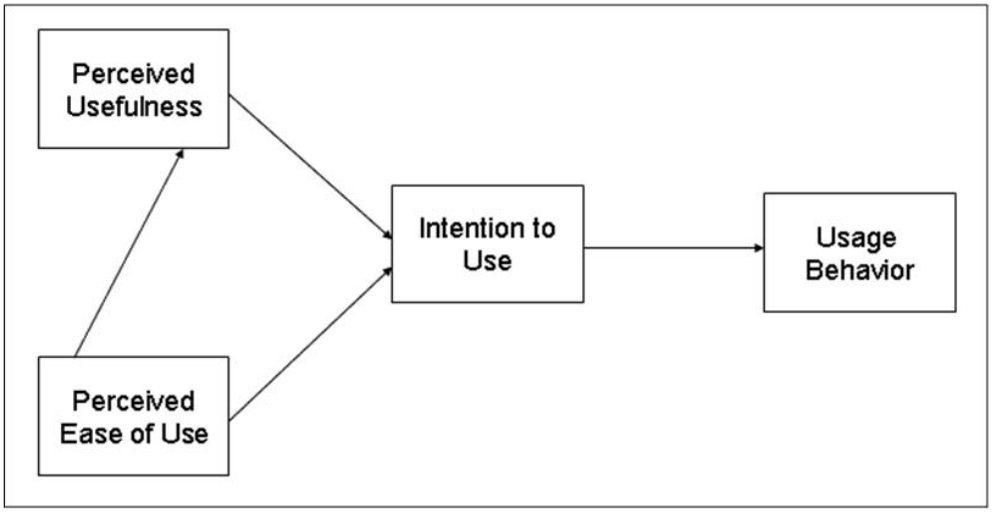

Figure 7. Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)
(Derived from Davis, 1986)

Theory of Planned Behavior

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) extended the Theory of Reasoned Action by including Perceived Behavioral Control as an additional determinant of intention and behavior. The constructs presented in this theory are defined below in Table 6.

Table 6. Theory of Planned Behavior
(Derived from Venkatesh et al., 2003)

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)	
Core Constructs	**Definitions**
Attitude Toward Behavior	Adapted from TRA
Subjective Norm	Adapted from TRA
Perceived Behavioral Control	"The perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behavior" (Ajzen, 1991, p. 188). "Perceptions of internal and external constraints on behavior (Taylor and Todd, 1995, p. 149).

The construct Perceived Behavioral Control is a condition of post-system interaction and is directly related to the behavioral factors that may or may not influence individual's to adopt new technologies. Perceived Behavioral Control was categorized as a construct related to adoption for this study because it is described as the "perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behavior," which leads to the assumption that the behavior in question has already been tried (Taylor & Todd, 1995, p. 149). The TPB has been used in a wide variety of settings and has been successfully applied to the understanding of individual acceptance/adoption and usage of many different technologies (Taylor & Todd, 1995). The TPB (Figure 8) posits that Attitudes, Subjective Norms, and Perceived Behavioral Control are shown to be related to appropriate sets of behavioral, normative, and control beliefs about the behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

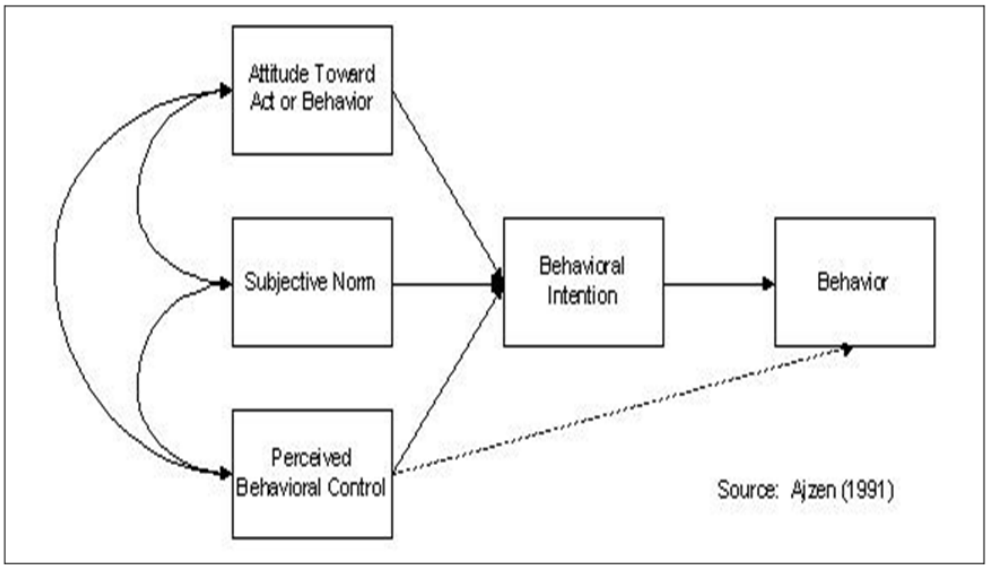

Figure 8. Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)
(Derived from Ajzen, 1991)

Combined TAM and TPB

Combined TAM and TPB (C-TAM-TPB) is a hybrid model that consolidates the post-system interaction constructs of TPB with the Perceived Usefulness construct from TAM (Taylor & Todd, 1995). This model (Figure 9) explains the adoption of information technology through analysis of attitudinal, social, and control elements. The significance of this model is that it can be used as a diagnostic tool to help predict information systems acceptance and adoption by highlighting the need for design changes before users acquire experience with a given system or technology (Taylor & Todd, 1995).

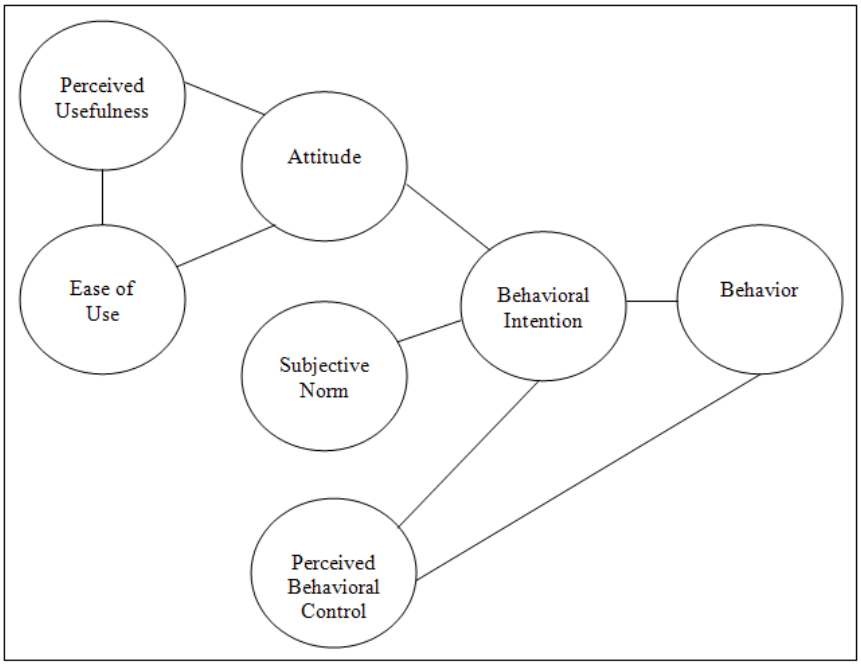

Figure 9. Combined TAM and TPB (C-TAM-TPB)
(Derived from Taylor & Todd, 1995)

IT Acceptance Theories/Models Related to Continued Use

The continued use stage of technology acceptance refers to the period in time when an individual formally begins to use a technology as an important aspect or customary routine in his or her daily life. Individuals that become routine users of a technology do so based on the innate value they realized during the trial and adoption stage of technology acceptance. This section examines the Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT) in order to provide an understanding of the factors that influence individuals to progress from the adoption stage of technology acceptance to the continued use stage. The constructs examined in this theory specifically relates to the system related factors that influence individuals to continue using a system or technology. The following theory lays the groundwork for answering the question: Why do individuals become routine or continuous users of New Media technologies?

Innovation Diffusion Theory

The Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT) is grounded in principles of sociology and has been used since the 1960s to study a variety of technological innovations (Rogers, 2003). In 1991, Moore and Benbasat adapted the characteristics of innovations presented in IDT and developed a set of constructs that could be used to study individual technology acceptance (Venkatesh et al., 2003). These constructs include Relative Advantage, Ease of Use, Image, Visibility, Compatibility, Results Demonstrability, and Voluntariness of Use (Moore & Benbasat, 1991). The constructs presented this theory are defined below in Table 7.

Table 7. Innovation Diffusion Theory
(Derived from Venkatesh et al., 2003)

Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT)	
Core Constructs	**Definitions**
Relative Advantage	"The degree to which an innovation is perceived as being better than its precursor" (Moore & Benbasat, 1991, p. 195).
Ease of Use	"The degree to which an innovation is perceived as being difficult to use" (Moore & Benbasat, 1991, p. 195).
Image	The degree to which use of an innovation is perceived to enhance one's image or status in one's social system" (Moore & Benbasat, 1991, p. 195).
Visibility	"The degree to which one can see others using the system in the organization" (Moore & Benbasat, 1991, p. 195).
Compatibility	"The degree to which an innovation is perceived as being consistent with the existing values, needs, and past experiences of potential adopters" (Moore & Benbasat, 1991, p. 195).
Results Demonstrability	"The tangibility of the results of using the innovation, including their observability and communicability" (Moore & Benbasat, 1991, p. 203).
Voluntariness of Use	"The degree to which use of the innovation is perceived as being voluntary or of free will" (Moore & Benbasat, 1991, p. 195).

The constructs presented in IDT include both personal and system factors that influence individuals to continue using new technologies. Relative Advantage is a system factor that influences individuals to believe they can gain a competitive advantage by using a new system. With Relative Advantage, the perceived thought that the use of a new system will be more valuable than the previous version is a determining factor for individuals to pursue and use the latest technologies available (Moore & Benbasat, 1991).

The IDT construct Ease of Use is a direct inverse of TAM's Perceived Ease of Use. In TAM, Perceived Ease of Use reflects "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort" (Davis, 1989, p. 320). However, in IDT, Ease of Use refers to the extent of perceived difficulty of using a system or technology (Moore & Benbasat, 1991). Image and Visibility are complimentary constructs of IDT because they influence the continued use of a system in similar ways. Image refers to the extent to which an individual believes that using a system will enhance his or her image, while Visibility reflects an individual's desire to improve his or her status within an organization by being seen as an active user of the system (Moore & Benbasat, 1991).

The Compatibility construct describes the relative importance of a system to be compatible with an individual's needs and past experiences. If a system is not compatible with a users needs, it will be less likely to be used on a routine or continuous basis. Results Demonstrability refers to the valued output of a system and the ability for the system to meet the communication needs of a user. If system users determine that they are not receiving the anticipated results from a given system, they may be more inclined to seek out an alternative system that produces the results they are looking for. The final construct discussed in IDT is Voluntariness of Use. This construct is closely aligned with the theme of this research because New Media is inherently used by voluntary users. IDT proposes that a system will be adopted and used more frequently if the individual believes his or her use of the system is voluntary and of free will (Moore & Benbasat, 1991).

IDT is a foundational theory for understanding users of New Media technology. This theory, coupled with its four key elements, explains how new innovations in the digital world can be used to broadcast messages quickly to many people (Rogers, 2003). According to Rogers (2003), the four key elements of IDT are:

1. *Innovation* - any idea, process, or object considered new by an individual or group.

2. *Communication Channel* –manner in which the information is disseminated to others.

3. *Social System* – any organization/group connected by some common purpose or goal.

4. *Time* – the length of the innovation-decision process, the actual time it takes for another individual or group to adopt the innovation, and the actual rate of adoption.

The previously discussed eight prominent IT acceptance theories and models and their contribution to the present study are summarized below in Table 8.

Table 8. Technology Acceptance Models and Theories of Individual Acceptance

Technology Acceptance Models and Theories of Individual Acceptance		
Trial	**Adoption**	**Continued Use**
Personal Factors		**System Factors**
Pre-System Interaction	***Post-System Interaction***	***Routine System Interaction***
Model of PC Utilization (MPCU) *Constructs - Job-Fit, Complexity, Long-Term Consequences, Affect Towards Use, Social Factors, & Facilitating Conditions **Motivational Model (MM)** *Constructs - Extrinsic Motivation Intrinsic Motivation **Social Cognitive Theory (SCT)** *Constructs - Performance Outcome Expectations, Personal Outcome Expectations, Self-Efficacy, Affect, & Anxiety	**Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)** *Constructs - Attitude Toward Behavior & Subjective Norm **Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)** *Constructs - Attitude Toward Behavior, Subjective Norm, & Perceived Behavioral Control **Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)** *Constructs - Perceived Usefulness & Perceived Ease of Use (TAM2 - Subjective Norm) **Combined TAM-TPB** *Constructs - Attitude Toward Behavior, Subjective Norm, Perceived Behavioral Control, Perceived Usefulness	**Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT)** *Constructs - Relative Advantage Ease of Use Image Visibility Compatibility Results Demonstrability Voluntariness of Use
Summary: The constructs examined in these theories specifically relate to the initial conditions that influence individuals prior to interaction with a given system, and include the personal factors that motivate or discourage individuals to try a new system or technology.	**Summary:** The constructs examined in these theories specifically relate to the personal factors of post-system interaction that influence individuals to adopt a new system or technology.	**Summary:** The constructs examined in this theory specifically relates to the system factors that influence individuals to continue using a system or technology.

The eight prominent models and theories discussed throughout this section provide a foundation for understanding the personal and system factors that influence the individual stages of technology acceptance. However, it can be seen from this review of the literature that no model to date has proposed a longitudinal treatment of these stages across time. In order to determine the personal and external influences associated with New Media, a better understanding of the humanistic factors that influence individuals to try, adopt, and continue to use New Media technologies is needed. Therefore, the following sections examine the current state of knowledge with respect to peer influence and the personality characteristics associated with users of New Media technology.

Personality Characteristics of Trial, Adoption, and Continued Use

"Personality is that pattern of characteristic thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that distinguishes one person from another and that persists over time and situation" (Phares, 1991, p. 4). Scholars have long studied the validity of personality measures on job performance. This study looks at a different angle of personality measures by examining how peer influence interacts across time with respect to the Big Five Model's personality characteristics of agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, extraversion, and intellect/openness to experiences. While there is no universal agreement on the Big Five model, it is a useful taxonomy and currently the one considered most influential in personality research (Barrick, Mount, & Judge, 2001). In addition to the Big Five taxonomy, the following personality characteristics were also examined: mavenism, susceptibility to interpersonal influence (SII), and social desirability bias (SDB). A thorough comprehension of how these different personality traits come into play in information seeking individuals has the potential to increase the understanding of why individuals decide to try, adopt, and continue to use New Media.

Of the personality characteristics examined, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and SII were selected for inclusion in this study due to their natural association with individual peer influence. The following sub-sections discuss the relevant literature regarding peer influence, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and SII in order to form an understanding of how these personality characteristics influence the trial, adoption, and continued use of New Media technologies across time. A total of six testable hypotheses were developed based on this literature review and the data collected throughout this study.

Peer Influence

The successful formation and navigation of interpersonal relationships with peers is central to both adolescent and adult development in all cultures. Peer influence is a humanistic process, defined as a form of pressure, either planned or unplanned, that is exerted by peers to influence personal behavior. Social or peer influence can affect the thoughts, feelings, or actions of individuals and can be seen in many forms such as conformity, socialization, peer pressure, obedience, and leadership. Social expectations are an important part of human culture and the development of peer groups often provides individuals with a sense of security or a safety net. Supportive or positive peer groups provide an opportunity for individuals to interact with equals through companionship, emotional support, and a sense of belonging (Griskevicius et al., 2008).

Characteristics of peer influence exist in various forms among today's IT related research. Peer influence is manifested in the previously discussed individual user acceptance of technology theories and models through the constructs of Subjective Norm, Social Factors, and Image. Subjective Norm, a core construct of TRA, TAM, and TPB, is defined as "a person's perception that most people who are important to him think he should or should not perform the behavior in question" (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975, p. 302). Social Factors, a core construct of MPCU, is defined as "the individual's internalization of the reference group's subjective culture, and specific interpersonal agreements that the individual has made with others" (Thompson, Higgins, and Howell, 1991, p. 126). Image, a core construct of IDT, is defined as "the degree to which use of an innovation is perceived to enhance one's image or status in one's social system (Moore & Benbasat, 1991, p. 195).

Research has shown that the impact of peer influence tends to increase during periods of uncertainty. Griskevicius, Cialdini, & Goldstein (2008) posit that "when individuals have little or no experience with a general type of product or service, the resultant uncertainty will make them especially receptive to peer influence" (p. 86). Based on this, it is conceivable that peer influence can be especially effective during the early stages of New Media trial and adoption because individuals are inexperienced with the technology and tend to look for clues from their peer groups regarding what to do.

Conscientiousness

In the realm of New Media technology it is important to consider the psychological and personality mechanisms of individuals in order to gain a thorough understanding of users of this technology. Conscientiousness is an individual personality characteristic used in the Big Five personality taxonomy and is synonymous with individuals that tend to be painstakingly careful, self-disciplined, goal-oriented, and well structured/organized. Individuals that are high in conscientiousness tend to be confident, dutiful, and reliable, while individuals that are low in conscientiousness tend to be carefree, relaxed, and possibly unorganized (Costa & McCrae, 1992). According to Barrick, Mount, & Judge (2001), conscientiousness has emerged as the most influential Big Five personality construct related to job performance. Three related facets manifest conscientiousness: achievement orientation, dependability, and orderliness (Barrick, Mount, & Judge, 2001).

Based on the characteristics associated with conscientiousness and peer influence, one can deduce that peer influence is less significant during the trial stage of New Media technologies (e.g. YouTube) for individuals with high levels of conscientiousness. For example, if highly conscientious individuals are pressured by their peers to try out a new website (e.g. YouTube); they may be more inclined to resist this form of peer influence because they are goal-oriented and structured in their daily routine (Barrick, Mount, & Judge, 2001). Therefore, it is conceivable that highly conscientious individuals may not view the introduction of a new technology as prudent with their goals and lifestyle and may view the technology as a waste of their time.

H1a:

During the New Media trial stage, conscientiousness will be negatively related to peer influence for individual's trying video sharing websites.

Additionally, this study theorizes that highly conscientious individuals will become increasingly influenced by their peers over time through the stages of trial, adoption, and continued use. For example, as time goes by and highly conscientious individuals progress through the trial stage of New Media, the influence from their peers may begin to positively impact their decision to adopt or continue using the technology. In this scenario, highly conscientious individuals may eventually become routine or habitual users of a new technology because they begin to view the technology as useful and as a method to maintain their status within their established peer group. This theory argues that although highly conscientious individuals are not easily influenced by their peers during the trial stage of a technology (*H1a*), they may tend to shift the target of

their own conscientiousness and focus more on pleasing or meeting the needs of their peers when pressured to use the technology over time. Coupled with the effect for the conscientiousness intercept in *H1a*, the following hypothesis suggests that the focus of conscientiousness may shift based on the effect of peer influence across time.

H1b:

The effect of conscientiousness will intensify the influence of peers across time as individual's progress through the stages of trial, adoption, and continued use of video sharing websites.

Emotional Stability

Emotional stability is an individual personality characteristic used in the Big Five personality taxonomy and is defined by the lack of anxiety, hostility, depression, and personal insecurity (Barrick, Mount, & Judge, 2001). Individuals with low levels of emotional stability are generally more sensitive, emotional, and prone to feelings that are upsetting, such as guilt or sadness. In contrast, individuals scoring high in emotional stability tend to be more emotionally secure, resistant to peer influence, and relaxed even under stressful conditions (Costa & McCrae, 1992).

In regard to New Media, this study hypothesizes that individuals with high levels of emotional stability are not likely to be coerced or influenced to try a new technology due to the inherent characteristics attributed to individuals with high emotional stability (i.e., resistant to peer influence and high self-confidence). In contrast, individuals with low emotional stability are more inclined to be influenced by their peers because research has shown that these individuals lack self-confidence and will-power, which might cause

them to be more easily swayed by their peers during the initial trial stage of a technology. Based on the characteristics associated with emotional stability and peer influence, one can conclude that peer influence is less significant during the trial stage of New Media technologies for individuals with high levels of emotional stability because they are more emotionally secure, thus resistant to peer influence (Costa & McCrae, 1992).

H2a:

During the New Media trial stage, emotional stability will be negatively related to peer influence for individuals trying video sharing websites.

Additionally, this study theorizes that individuals scoring high in emotional stability will be less influenced by peers across time through the stages of trial, adoption, and continued use than individuals scoring low in emotional stability. This may be because individuals with high levels of emotional stability are not easily influenced by their peers, even if their peers are all devout users of a New Media technology. Therefore, this study posits that individuals high in emotional stability will be more inclined to progress through the stages of New Media at their own pace and based on their own opinion of the technology, not because they were coerced or influenced by external factors. Coupled with the effect for the emotional stability intercept in *H2a*, the following hypothesis suggests that the focus of emotional stability may shift based on the effect of peer influence across time.

H2b:

The effect of emotional stability will temper the influence of peers across time as individual's progress through the stages of trial, adoption, and continued use of video sharing websites.

Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence

It is also theorized here that another important determinant to understanding why individual's try, adopt, and continue to use New Media technologies is their susceptibility to interpersonal influence. Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence (SII) is an individual personality characteristic defined as such by Bearden, Netemeyer, & Teel (1989) as:

> The need to identify with or enhance one's image in the opinion of significant others through the acquisition and use of products and brands, the willingness to conform to the expectations of others regarding purchase decisions, and/or the tendency to learn about products and services by observing others or seeking information from others. (p. 473)

Studies on SII and the relationship to other individual traits and characteristics by McGuire (1968) revealed that SII is a general trait that varies across people and that an individual's level of interpersonal influence in one situation tends to have a significant positive relationship with that same individual being influenced in a range of other social situations (Bearden, Netemeyer, & Teel, 1989).

Individuals with high levels of SII are more likely to view the introduction of a New Media technology as a gateway to improving their social image and may readily try a technology for this sole purpose, even if they don't particularly like what the technology has to offer them. This may be because individuals with high levels of SII are constantly seeking ways to improve their image, reputation, or status within their social system (Bearden, Netemeyer, & Teel, 1989). Based on the characteristics associated with SII and peer influence, one can deduce that peer influence is more significant during the trial stage of New Media technologies (e.g. YouTube) for individuals with high levels of SII because these individuals may view the technology as appeasing to social norms.

H3a:

During the New Media trial stage, susceptibility to interpersonal influence will be positively related to peer influence for individuals trying video sharing websites.

Additionally, this study theorizes that individuals with high levels of SII will become increasingly influenced by peers across time through the stages of trial, adoption, and continued use. It is suspected that individuals with high levels of SII believe their adoption and continued use of New Media will help them maintain and/or improve their status within their peer group. Therefore, this study posits that individuals high in SII will be more inclined to progress through the stages of New Media if they believe it will help improve their social image. Coupled with the effect for the SII intercept in *H3a*, the following hypothesis suggests that the focus of SII may incrementally shift based on the effect of peer influence across time.

H3b:

The effect of susceptibility to interpersonal influence will intensify the influence of peers across time as individual's progress through the stages of trial, adoption, and continued use of video sharing websites.

The following models provide a graphical representation of the six hypotheses proposed in this chapter. Figure 10 represents hypotheses H1a, H2a, and H3a, and demonstrates the relationship between the personality characteristics and peer influence on individual's trying video sharing websites.

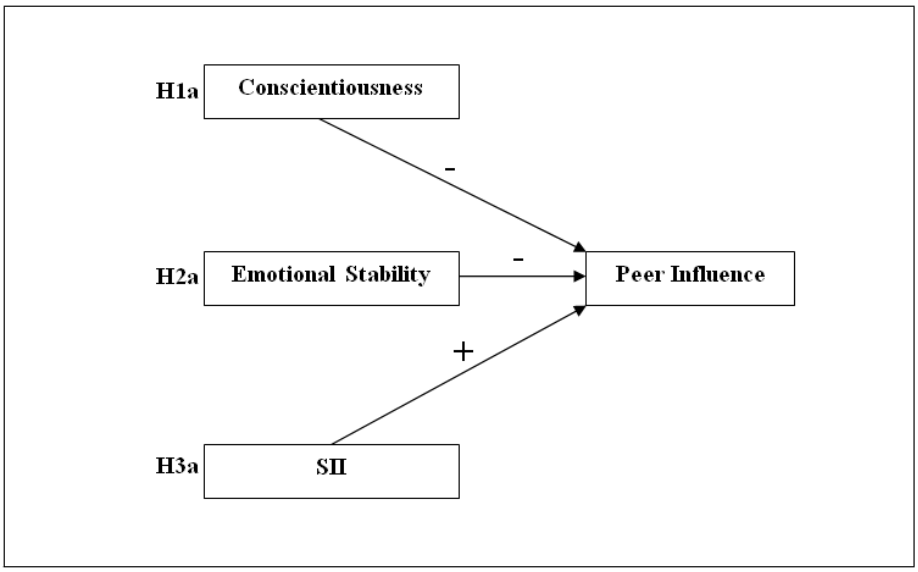

Figure 10. Hypotheses Model: H1a, H2a, and H3a

Figure 11 represents hypotheses H1b, H2b, and H3b, and demonstrates how peer influence is moderated by the personality characteristics as individual's progress across time from trial through adoption and continued use of video sharing websites.

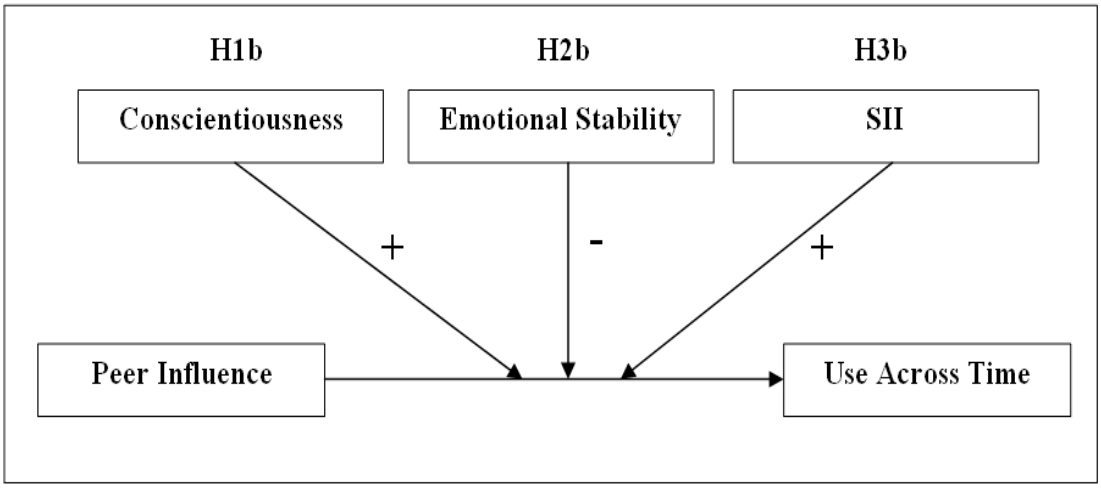

Figure 11. Hypotheses Model: H1b, H2b, and H3b

III. Methodology

Research Design

This study primarily incorporated a quantitative research design; however, qualitative data were collected for analysis during future research. Quantitative research is defined as any type of research that produces results and/or findings in mathematical terms that arrive via statistical analysis or any other form of quantification (Bordens & Abbott, 2005). The quantitative data collected during this study were derived primarily from questions asked in semi-structured interviews and individual personality surveys.

Sample Characteristics

The sample population used to acquire the data for this research effort consisted of 63 undergraduate and graduate students attending a medium size Midwest university in the United States. While this sample is not representative of the entire population, it is sufficient to reach theoretical saturation regarding the concepts presented in this study. The semi-structured interviews were conducted on the university campus in two different conference room locations. The offices were clear of any objects that could distract the participant during the interview process.

Each student participated in a semi-structured interview session that was documented with an audio recorder and on paper using an interview guide. The ethnicity of the participants included African American (22%), Asian/Pacific Islander (17%), Caucasian (58%), Native American (2%), and Bi-Ethnic (1%). A total of 63 young adults, both male (52%) and female (48%), participated in the study. These participants ranged between 18-21 years of age (69%) and 22-25 years of age (31%). Most of the

participants were from the United States (80%), with the others from Western Europe (3%), Taiwan (2%), China (2%), India (11%), and Other Regions (2%). The reported family income ranges of the student participants were less than $40,000 (28%), between $40,000 and $50,000 (30%), and more than $50,000 (42%).

Data Collection Procedures

Student volunteers were solicited through an advertisement campaign on the university campus and via the university's portal website. A copy of this research advertisement is located in Appendix C. A monetary incentive of a $15 department/grocery store gift card was offered to qualifying participants in order to compensate them for their time.

Once potential subjects responded to the research solicitation, they were asked to fill out a short self-reported screener survey to obtain demographic data and to determine their level and frequency of New Media usage. The screener was used to establish participant eligibility by ensuring each potential subject had tried, adopted, and/or continually used New Media technologies. Once eligibility was determined, the student subjects were scheduled for 60 minute semi-structured interviews. Upon completion of the interview session, participants accomplished a brief personality survey in order to measure their individual personality characteristics.

Measures/Instruments

The following three items were used to collect data for this study: (1) self-reported screener survey, (2) semi-structured interview, and (3) a personality survey. Once the data were collected, the self-reported screener survey, interview, and personality survey data were transcribed into a consolidated database for further analysis in the statistical program SPSS. The three instruments used as measures for this research are detailed below.

Self-Reported Screener Survey

The first instrument used for the data collection was the self-reported screener survey. The purpose of this screener survey was to verify individual exposure to New Media technologies, collect frequency of use data, and to collect demographic data (i.e., sex, age, ethnicity, country of origin, and household income). The screener survey was used to ensure that the participants selected for the interviews actually consisted of avid users of New Media technologies. Furthermore, the screener helped determine the level of New Media technology experience that each subject possessed (Walinski, 2009). A copy of the self-reported screener survey is located in Appendix D.

Before the screener surve was used for this research, a pilot study was conducted to test the proposed questions used in the screener. The goal of this pilot study was twofold: (1) to evaluate the relevance of the questionnaire, and (2) to use grounded response distribution to determine the appropriate cut-off values for each section of the screener that the participants would need to meet in order to remain eligible for the interview. Once finalized, the screener survey was used to determine participant eligibility for the study (Walinski, 2009).

The screener survey consisted of eleven questions divided into three different sections. Section 1 of the screener consisted of four questions relating to New Media exposure. In order to be deemed eligible for this study, participants needed to answer "yes" to at least three of the following four questions:

(1) Do you have your own blog or personal website (this doesn't include your own page on Facebook, MySpace or similar sites)?

(2) In the last month, have you contacted someone through a social networking site like MySpace or Facebook on more than one occasion?

(3) In the last month, have you searched for content on social media sites like YouTube or Flickr on more than one occasion?

(4) In the last month, have you made a purchase, submitted a product review, read a product review, or searched a product online on more than one occasion?

Section 2 of the screener was used to determine frequency of use of New Media technologies. Eligibility for this section was determined by the number of hours per week the subject used New Media technologies. If potential subjects reported less than one hour of use with New Media technologies per week, they were not selected to be interviewed as part of this study. In order to remain eligible for the study, each subject was required to meet at least two of the following six activities target ranges: two hours contributing to your own website or blog, five hours reading blogs or online forums, six hours visiting social networking sites (e.g. Facebook), six hours visiting video sharing sites (e.g. YouTube), two hours searching for and listening to Podcasts, or three hours spent playing games online (Walinski, 2009).

Section 3 of the screener asked the subjects to provide information about personal demographics such as sex, age, ethnicity, country of origin, and household income. This process concluded with a total of 63 subjects being identified as eligible to participate in the semi-structured interview sessions discussed in the following section.

Semi-Structured Interview

The second instrument used to collect data was the semi-structured interview. The interviews are described as semi-structured due to the arrangment and types of questions used (Walinski, 2009). Once eligibility for the study was determined, an appointment was made to conduct the semi-structured interviews with each of the 63 participants. The questions asked related specifically to the subjects' use of the video sharing website YouTube. Prior to conducting each interview, a consent form explaining the purpose of the research and rights of the interviewee was reviewed and signed by each participant. A copy of this Consent for Participation in Research form is located in Appendix E.

Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected during the semi-structured interviews; however, the qualitative data were not examined in this study because it was beyond the scope of this research. An interview guide was developed in order to conduct each interview session. The interview guide was designed using a 7-point Likert-scale for each quantitative question. The use of a 7-point scale was implemented in this study in order to garner more variance between the participant's answers.

For each question, the respondent was first asked to verbally rate his or her answer using this 7-point scale. In addition to providing a scaled rating for each question, the respondents were also asked to provide a descriptive answer based on their rating for inclusion in future qualitative analysis. Although the qualitative data collected in this study were not analyzed, the questions were open-ended to allow the participants to discuss their connections with the New Media technology in greater detail. This interview technique not only allowed the respondents to express their opinions in their own words, but it also made each interview feel more like an open conversation, thus improving the validity of the information revealed (Bordens & Abbott, 2005).

The interview consisted of twenty questions divided into four sections. The data collected from these questions were based on frequency data (e.g., time in trial, adoption, and continued use) and scale data from the 7-point Likert scale. A copy of the interview guide used in this study is located in Appendix F. Section 1 of the interview guide consisted of four questions that pertain to how the respondent's started using YouTube and their current state of use or frequency with the technology. The questions asked in this section are as follows:

(1) How long (e.g., number of months or years) have you been using YouTube?

(2) How often (e.g., once a day, once a week) do you use YouTube?

(3) How much time (e.g., 5 min, 30 min) do you spend with YouTube when you use it?

(4) How did you know about the technology (e.g., mass media or interpersonal)?

Section 2 of the interview guide consisted of six questions regarding the respondent's experiences with the trial of YouTube. The questions asked in this section are as follows:

(1) When did you first try YouTube for yourself?

(2) How would you rate experimentation as the reason to try YouTube?

(3) How would you rate ease of use as the reason to try YouTube?

(4) How would you rate peer influence as the reason to try YouTube?

(5) How many features in YouTube have you tried?

(6) How many features in YouTube have you tried (proportion of features)?

Section 3 of the interview guide consisted of five questions regarding the respondent's experiences with the adoption of YouTube. The questions asked in this section are as follows:

(1) When did you first decide to adopt YouTube for yourself?

(2) How would you rate ease of use as the reason to adopt YouTube?

(3) How would you rate peer influence as the reason to adopt YouTube?

(4) How would you rate technology features as the reason to adopt YouTube?

(5) How would you rate technology content as the reason to adopt YouTube?

Section 4 of the interview guide consisted of five questions regarding the respondent's experiences with their continued use of YouTube. The questions asked in this section are as follows:

(1) When did you first decide to continue using YouTube for yourself?

(2) How would you rate ease of use as the reason to continue using YouTube?

(3) How would you rate peer influence as the reason to continue using YouTube?

(4) How would you rate technology features as the reason to continue using YouTube?

(5) How would you rate technology content as the reason to continue using YouTube?

Personality Survey

The third instrument used for this research data collection was the use of a multi-factor personality survey. Upon completion of the semi-structured interviews, each respondent was asked to fill out a brief personality survey. This survey was divided into two sections with the first section measuring traits from the Big Five Factors (e.g., agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, extraversion, and openness to experience) using a scale from the International Personality Item Pool (IPIP) (International, 2011; Goldberg, 1992). The second section of the personality survey measured the respondents level of social desirability bias (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960), susceptibility to interpersonal influence (Bearden, Netemeyer, & Teel, 1989), and mavenism (Feick & Price, 1987). The descriptive statistics for each of the personality variables measured in this study are presented below in Table 9. This table includes the minimum, maximum, mean, standard deviation, and chronbach's alpha (α) based on a culmination of the scaled scores collected from the participant's personality surveys. The cronbach's α for each item indicated an acceptable level of reliability for the scales used in this study.

Table 9. New Media Descriptive Statistics and Cronbach's α

Variable	Min.	Max.	M	SD	Cronbach's α
Extraversion	1.4	5.0	3.42	0.81	.789
Agreeableness	2.8	5.0	4.05	0.48	.713
Conscientiousness	2.7	5.0	3.73	0.59	.781
Emotional Stability	1.2	4.6	3.48	0.74	.756
Openness to Experience	2.6	4.9	3.69	0.55	.739
Mavenism	2.2	6.7	4.76	1.03	.761
SDB	3.0	7	5.33	.83	.638
SII	1.0	5	2.71	1.12	.743

Note: N = 63.

Big Five Factors

The revised Big Five Factors IPIP scale used in the first section of the personality survey was developed and validated by Goldberg in 1992 (International, 2011). The IPIP scale measures the personality characteristics of extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness to experiences through a 50 item survey. Each factor consisted of ten unipolar items measured on a self-reported 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree" (International, 2011; Goldberg, 1992). Summing the respective positively or negatively coded items and computing the mean resulted in the individual personality factors for each trait. A copy of the Big Five Factor personality survey used in this study is located in Appendix G.

SDB, SII, and Mavenism

The second section of the personality survey measured the personality characteristics of social desirability bias (SDB), susceptibility to interpersonal influence (SII), and mavenism. Each of these items were measured using a 7-point Likert scale that ranged from "7" for "Completely True" to "1" for "Completely False." A copy of the SDB/SII/Mavenism personality survey is located in Appendix H.

Social Desirability Bias Measures

This scale measures how likely the subjects are to bias their responses. Mean SDB scores above 4.0 are commensurate with individuals who believe they need social approval or acceptance through culturally acceptable and appropriate behavior (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960). In this study, SDB represents a motivational characteristic driven by the need to gain social approval through one's actions.

Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence Measures

Used primarily in consumer marketing, SII describes the degree to which individuals are influenced by real or imagined others (Kropp, Lavack, & Silvera, 2005). Individuals with a mean SII factor score above 5.0 are more easily influenced and have a greater disposition to seek peer opinions for information on consumer products (Bearden, Netemeyer, & Teel, 1989).

Mavenism Measures

This scale measures the likelihood of individual to try new products and their propensity to provide general shopping and marketplace information. Subject taking this portion of the survey can be placed into one of three categories based on their mavenism scale scores (high, medium, or low). Individuals with a mean mavenism factor score above 4.0 are referred to as "market mavens" and are more likely to try new products (Feick & Price, 1987).

IV. Results and Analysis

New Media Bivariate Correlations

Once the data were collected, the self-reported screener survey, interview guide, and personality survey data were transcribed into a consolidated database for further analysis in the statistical program SPSS. A bivariate correlation was initially run using SPSS in order to identify any relationships that may exist between each of the variables. Table 10 presents the bivariate correlations of the predictors examined and measured in this study.

Table 10. New Media Bivariate Correlations

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Extraversion	1.0										
Agreeableness	.05	1.0									
Conscientiousness	-.10	.17	1.0								
Emotional Stability	.27*	-.08	.13	1.0							
Openness to Experience	.18	.25*	-.05	-.17	1.0						
Mavenism	.33*	.04	.07	.15	.23	1.0					
SDB	.07	.46*	.25*	.05	.04	.04	1.0				
SII	.12	.05	.02	.01	-.19	.04	-.08	1.0			
Trial: Peer Influence	-.14	-.06	-.19	.04	-.21	-.11	.03	-.19	1.0		
Adopt: Peer Influence	-.11	-.03	-.16	-.11	-.11	-.08	-.03	.08	.62*	1.0	
Use: Peer Influence	-.06	-.06	-.07	-.13	.00	.18	-.14	.07	.45*	.79*	1.00

Note: $N = 63$. * Correlation is significant at the $p < 0.05$ level.

Random Intercept Model

In order to test the hypotheses proposed in chapter 2 of this study, three consecutive statistical models were analyzed. The first statistical model analyzed was the random intercept model. This model examined the total variance between where each person in the sample population starts in relation to the intercept (Field, 2009). Figure 12 portrays a simulated example of the random intercept model used in this study.

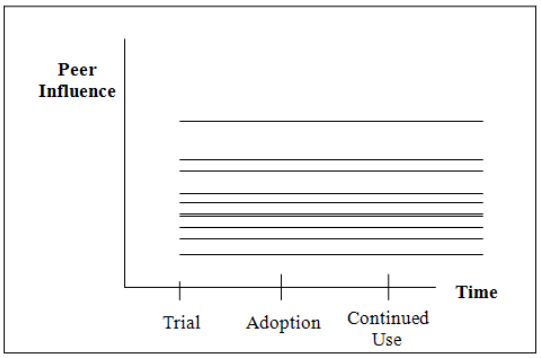

Figure 12. Simulated Random Intercept Model

Using statistical analysis software (SAS), the criterion measure was analyzed via the intraclass correlation coefficient type 1 (ICC1) (Bliese, 2000). In the current study, the ICC1 indicates how much of the variability in the self-reported influence of peers to try, adopt, and continue to use video sharing websites is a result of between-person differences across the stages of trial, adoption, and continued use. The ICC1 was calculated by determining the ratio of between-person variance to overall variance as in the following equation:

$$ICC1 = \frac{\tau_{00}}{\tau_{00} + \sigma^2}$$

In this equation τ_{00} represents the between-person variance while σ^2 represents the residual within-person variance of an unconditional (random intercept) mixed-effects model (Bliese & Ployhart, 2002). Analysis revealed an ICC1 of .61, indicating that between-person variance explained 61% of the variance in the influence of peers for individuals to try, adopt, and continue to use video sharing websites. This finding suggests that because considerable inter-individual differences in the influence of peers exist across time, hierarchical linear modeling is an appropriate analytic technique to further explore (Bliese, 2000).

Unconditional Growth Model

The second statistical model analyzed was an unconditional growth model. In this model, both the intercept and slope start in different places and generate different trajectories that show how people's motivations differ across time (Bliese, 2000). Figure 13 portrays a simulated example of the unconditional growth model used in this study.

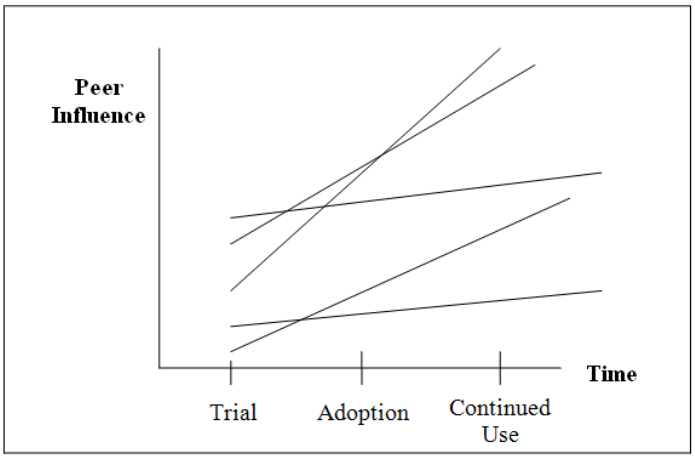

Figure 13. Simulated Unconditional Growth Model

The unconditional growth model was fit to ascertain whether enough significant inter-individual differences existed in the pattern of influence afforded from peers for individuals to try, adopt, and use video sharing websites through the stages of trial, adoption, and continued use in order to warrant examining moderators of peer influence across time (Bliese, 2000). The equation used in the unconditional growth model is detailed below as follows:

$$Y_{ij} = \pi_{0j} + \pi_{1j}(TIME)_{ij} + r_{ij} \quad \text{where } r_{ij} \sim N(0, \sigma^2)$$

and

$$\pi_{0j} = ß_{00} + u_{0j}$$

$$\pi_{1j} = ß_{10} + u_{1j}$$

where

$$\begin{pmatrix} u_{0j} \\ u_{1j} \end{pmatrix} \sim N\left[\begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}, \begin{pmatrix} \tau_{00} & \tau_{01} \\ \tau_{10} & \tau_{11} \end{pmatrix}\right]$$

In this model Y_{ij} represents peer influence for a given individual at a given time. The intercept, π_{0j}, is coded to represent peer influence during the trial phase because *i* represents the number of stages from the trial stage. The parameter π_{1j} is the linear trend across time. Both the intercept and linear trend were modeled randomly across individuals as indicated by the u_{0j} and u_{1j}. The results of the unconditional growth model are presented in Table 11. These results provide support for the hypotheses proposed in chapter 2 by suggesting that individuals statistically differ in both the amount peers influence individual decisions to try video sharing websites ($\tau_{00} = 2.85$, $z = 4.70$, $p < .001$) and how that influence changes across adoption and continued use ($\tau_{11} = 0.64$, $z = 3.57$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, these results suggest moderators of peer influence that may be predictable regarding how an individual initially reacts to New Media and how they continue to interact with that media across time.

Conditional Growth Model

The third and final model analyzed was a conditional growth model. This model was used to test and answer the hypotheses regarding conscientiousness, emotional stability, and susceptibility to interpersonal influence intercepts and slopes. This model was developed as follows:

$$Y_{ij} = \pi_{0j} + \pi_{1j}(TIME)_{ij} + r_{ij} \quad \text{where } r_{ij} \sim N(0, \sigma^2)$$

and

$$\pi_{0j} = ß_{00} + ß_{01}(sex) + ß_{02}(z_{extra}) + ß_{03}(z_{agree}) + ß_{04}(z_{conscience}) +$$

$$ß_{05}(z_{emotional}) + ß_{06}(z_{open}) + ß_{07}(z_{maven}) + ß_{08}(z_{social}) + ß_{09}(z_{suseptible}) + u_{0j}$$

$$\pi_{1j} = ß_{10} + ß_{11}(sex) + ß_{12}(z_{extra}) + ß_{13}(z_{agree}) + ß_{14}(z_{conscience}) +$$

$$ß_{15}(z_{emotional}) + ß_{16}(z_{open}) + ß_{17}(z_{maven}) + ß_{18}(z_{social}) + ß_{19}(z_{suseptible}) + u_{1j}$$

where

$$\begin{pmatrix} u_{0j} \\ u_{1j} \end{pmatrix} \sim N\left[\begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}, \begin{pmatrix} \tau_{00} & \tau_{01} \\ \tau_{10} & \tau_{11} \end{pmatrix}\right]$$

In this model Y_{ij} represents peer influence for a given individual at a given time. The intercept, π_{0j}, is coded to represent peer influence during the trial phase because *i* represents the number of stages from the trial stage. The parameter π_{1j} is the linear trend across time. In this model both the intercept and linear parameters from the unconditional growth model are now predicted from nine predictor variables (sex, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, openness to experience, mavenism, social desirability, and susceptibility to interpersonal influence) but are still allowed to randomly vary across individuals.

The Level 2 predictors (e.g. individual difference variables) of the present study were grand mean centered and standardized for ease of interpretation and understanding. This practice produces a metric where the zero point of each individual difference variable represents the population average, and a one unit change represents a difference in standard deviation (Enders & Tofighi, 2007).

This model was fit using maximum likelihood and converged in two iterations due to the balanced nature of the data (Singer & Willett, 2003). The intercept, $ß_{00} = 5.52$, $t(54) = 17.36$, $p < .001$, and linear slope, $ß_{00} = –0.23$, $t(54) = –1.42$, estimates suggest that on average, individuals report peer influence as being a considerable reason for trying video sharing websites, and that this influence does not seem to change much over the stages of adoption and continued use. The results of both the unconditional and conditional growth model are presented below in Table 11.

Table 11. Unconditional and Conditional Growth Models

		Unconditional Model				Conditional Model			
Fixed Effects	Sym.	Coef.	Coef. *SE*	*t*	Std. coef.	Coef.	Coef. *SE*	*t*	Std. coef.
Level 1 Model									
Intercept	β_{00}	4.92	0.23	21.37[a] ***	2.68	5.52	0.32	17.36[b]***	3.00
Linear	β_{10}	–0.05	0.12	–0.38[a]	–0.03	–0.23	0.16	–1.42[b]	–0.13
Level 2 Model									
Sex	β_{01}					–1.12	0.46	–2.44[a]*	–0.61
Extraversion	β_{02}					–0.21	0.23	–0.89[a]	–0.11
Agreeableness	β_{03}					–0.10	0.25	–0.42[a]	–0.06
Conscientiousness	β_{04}					–0.59	0.22	–2.66[a]**	–0.32
Emotional Stability	β_{05}					0.20	0.23	0.89[a]	0.11
Openness	β_{06}					–0.30	0.24	–1.27[a]	–0.16
Mavenism	β_{07}					0.02	0.22	0.08[a]	0.01
Social Desirability	β_{08}					0.17	0.24	0.71[a]	0.09
Susceptibility	β_{09}					–0.26	0.22	–1.21[a]	–0.14
Linear x Sex	β_{11}					0.35	0.24	1.48[a]	0.19
Linear x Extraversion	β_{12}					0.02	0.12	0.13[a]	0.01
Linear x Agreeableness	β_{13}					0.01	0.13	0.09[a]	0.01
Linear x Conscientiousness	β_{14}					0.22	0.11	1.87[a]*	0.12
Linear x Emotional Stability	β_{15}					–0.21	0.12	–1.83[a]*	–0.12
Linear x Openness	β_{16}					0.15	0.12	1.21[a]	0.08
Linear x Mavenism	β_{17}					0.21	0.12	1.78[a]†	0.11
Linear x Social Desirability	β_{18}					–0.17	0.12	–1.39[a]	–0.09
Linear x Susceptibility	β_{19}					0.24	0.11	2.14[a]*	0.13

Random Effects	Sym.	Variance	*SD*	*r*	Variance	*SD*	*r*
1. Intercept	τ_{00}	2.85	0.61		2.10	0.48	
2. Linear	τ_{11}	0.64	0.18	–.44*	0.38	0.14	–.27
Residual	σ^2	0.65	0.12		0.65	0.12	

Note. N = 63. k = 189. The intercept reflects peer influence during the trial stage. Predictors are grand mean centered and standardized. Standardized coefficients were derived by setting the standard deviation of all variables to 1 without altering the centering of the variables. Coef. = coefficient. Std. coef. = standardized coefficient. Sym. = Symbol. [a] df = 63. [b] df = 54. † p < .10. * p < .05. ** p < .01. *** p < .001.

Hypotheses Testing

H1a: Supported

Hypothesis *H1a* which stated that *during the New Media trial stage, conscientiousness would be negatively related to peer influence for individual's trying video sharing websites* was supported, $ß_{04} = –0.59$, $t(63) = –2.66$, $p < .01$. This finding suggests that higher conscientious individuals will not be as susceptible to peer influence as a reason for trying video sharing websites as compared to lower conscientious individuals.

H1b: Supported

Hypothesis *H1b* which stated that *the effect of conscientiousness would intensify the influence of peers across time as individual's progress through the stages of trial, adoption, and continued use of video sharing websites* was supported, $ß_{14} = 0.22$, $t(63) = 1.87$, $p = .03$. This finding suggests that as one progresses through the stages of trial, adoption, and continued use, higher conscientious individuals will report peer influence as changing more quickly than lower conscientious individuals. Taken together with the findings of hypothesis *H1a* regarding higher conscientious people reporting lower levels of peer influence as a reason for trying video sharing websites, it may be that conscientious individuals tend to shift the target of their conscientiousness through time.

H2a: Not Supported

Hypothesis *H2a* which stated that *during the New Media trial stage, emotional stability would be negatively related to peer influence for individuals trying video sharing* websites was not supported, $ß_{05} = 0.20$, $t(63) = 0.89$, $p = .19$. It appears that in the present study, emotional stability was not related to peer influence as a reason for trying video sharing websites.

H2b: Supported

Hypothesis *H2b* which stated that *the effect of emotional stability would temper the influence of peers across time as individual's progress through the stages of trial, adoption, and continued use of video sharing websites* was supported, $ß_{15} = –0.21$, $t(63) = –1.83$, $p = .04$. This finding suggests that emotional stability serves as a buffer for the influence of peers throughout the stages of trial, adoption, and continued use of video sharing websites. Taken together with the findings of hypothesis *H2a,* it appears emotional stability is not an instantaneous effect, but is instead temporal in nature.

H3a: Not Supported

Hypothesis *H3a* which stated that *during the New Media trial stage, susceptibility to interpersonal influence would be positively related to peer influence for individuals trying video sharing websites* was not supported, $ß_{09} = –0.26$, $t(63) = –1.21$, $p = .11$. It appears that in the present study susceptibility to peer influence was not related to peer influence as a reason for trying video sharing websites.

H3b: Supported

Hypothesis *H3b* which stated that *the effect of susceptibility to interpersonal influence will intensify the influence of peers across time as individual's progress through the stages of trial, adoption, and continued use of video sharing websites* was supported, $ß_{19} = 0.24$, $t(63) = 2.14$, $p = .02$. This finding suggests that as one progresses through the stages of trial, adoption, and continued use, individuals with a higher susceptibility to interpersonal influence will report peer influence as changing more quickly than individuals with a lower susceptibility to interpersonal influence. Taken together with the findings from hypothesis *H3a*, it appears that susceptibility to peer influence is not an instantaneous effect, but is instead temporal in nature.

V. Discussion

Findings

The primary goal of this research was to contribute to the current breadth of knowledge and understanding regarding how, why, and under what conditions New Media technologies cause people to become influenced over time. In order to achieve this goal and help fill the gap in New Media research, the following research question was developed: *To what degree does peer influence interact with the personality characteristics of individuals as it relates to New Media trial, adoption, and continued use across time?* The findings of this research question were determined through the insight gained from answering the following two core investigative questions:

> *(1) What role does peer influence have on individual trial, adoption, and continued use of New Media technologies?*

As predicted, peer influence played an integral role regarding individual's trial, adoption, and continued use of New Media technologies. While only one hypothesis (*H2a*) supported the notion that peer influence has a strong impact on individuals to try video sharing websites, two other hypotheses (*H1b* and *H3b*) revealed that peer influence is a predictor of individuals to continue using video sharing websites over time.

(2) What are the significant personality characteristics that influence individuals to try, adopt, and continue to use New Media technologies?

This study examined the following personality characteristics: agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, extraversion, openness to experiences, mavenism, susceptibility to interpersonal influence, and social desirability bias. Of the personality characteristics examined, analysis revealed a significant relationship between peer influence and conscientiousness, emotional stability, and susceptibility to interpersonal influence as measured over time through the stages of trial, adoption, and continued use.

The overarching research question was answered by hypotheses *H1b*, *H2b*, and *H3b*. These hypotheses examined the effects of peer influence on personality characteristics throughout the stages of New Media trial, adoption, and continued use. The results of these hypotheses revealed that peer influence is in fact moderated by intrinsic personality characteristics across time through the stages of trial, adoption, and continued use.

One of the most interesting findings of this study is derived from the results of hypotheses *H1a* and *H1b*. Hypothesis *H1a* revealed that peer influence is less significant for individuals with high levels of conscientiousness during the trial stage of video sharing websites when compared to individuals with lower levels of conscientiousness. This finding is consistent with current literature because research has shown that highly conscientious individuals tend to be painstakingly careful, self-disciplined, goal-oriented, and well structured/organized (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Based on the present study, one can deduce that peer influence is less significant during the trial stage of New Media technologies for individuals with high levels of conscientiousness, because these

individuals may view the technology as a waste of time. However, the findings from *H1b* stated that the effects of conscientiousness would intensify the influence of peers regarding an individual's continued use of video sharing websites. This suggests that as highly conscientious individuals progress past the trial stage of video sharing websites, they tend to shift the target of their own conscientiousness over time.

Limitations

Although this study broke new ground in the realm of New Media research, it does have some limitations. The first limitation deals with the characteristics of the sample population interviewed during the data collect. While the sample was diverse in nature, the demographics and personality characteristics of the sample are not representative of the entire population. The next limitation deals with interviewee apprehension. In any interview session, there could be a lack of trust between the interviewer and interviewee, which may prevent the interviewee from giving responses that resemble his or her true feelings. This lack of trust has the potential to sway the data given by the interviewees because they may believe that the interviewer will publicly disclose their answers. Additionally, interviewees may fall prey to the Hawthorne effect, also known as demand characteristics, in which the interviewee answers the questions based on what he or she thinks the interviewer wants to hear (Myers & Newman, 2006). The final limitation of this study concerns the use of a single-item measure to analyze peer influence. With single-item measures, reliability issues may be encountered if the subject fails to understand the single item. The individual may then answer questions in a manner which does not align with the study's definition of the measure and item.

Opportunities for Future Research

The present study provided a foundational understanding of the effects of peer influence and personality characteristics through the New Media stages of trial, adoption, and continued use. This research provides criteria in which to build upon and presents several opportunities for future research.

As previously discussed, qualitative data were collected during each of the 63 semi-structured interview sessions. This data was outside the scope of this study; therefore, a thorough analysis of the qualitative data should be conducted in order to develop an explanatory model that maps the themes, patterns, and associations identified from both the quantitative and qualitative data.

This study specifically examined the effects of peer influence and personality characteristics associated with New Media trial, adoption, and use. Future research should examine the internal, social, network, and product-specific factors that influence the stages of New Media. Further research on these topics has the potential to dramatically improve our understanding of the driving factors that influence New Media users.

Finally, due to the limited size of the study sample, a larger and more diverse sample would provide a better representation of the New Media user population. Therefore, future research should focus on identifying the best possible or optimal research approach for conducting a multi-country New Media study. Such a study could have the potential to realize significant improvements in the current state of understanding regarding how individuals in foreign countries are influenced across time through the stages of New Media trial, adoption, and continued use.

Potential Benefits

Although this is a foundational study, the potential benefits that can be realized through further research are vast. This study has the potential to serve as the basis for understanding how New Media technologies can be leveraged to:

(1) Disseminate a more agreeable message to our cause

(2) Help form the basis for security and denial capabilities

(3) Provide an understanding of how New Media technologies can be used to radicalize users

(4) Keep those who are now able to easily broadcast messages of hate, violence, and intolerance from doing so

Thesis Conclusion

This thesis explored the effects of peer influence and personality characteristics on New Media technologies. The purpose of this study was to provide an understanding of how peer influence and individual personality characteristics interact across time through the stages of New Media trial, adoption, and continued use. In order to achieve this objective, an extensive literature review was conducted involving eight prominent theories/models of individual user acceptance of technology and the personality characteristics associated with individual users of New Media technology. As a result of this literature review, a total of six testable hypotheses were proposed. The research methodology involved the collection of quantitative data from 63 university students. The following three instruments were used in the data collection: self-reported screener, interview guide, and personality survey.

The results of this thesis were determined through a longitudinal study of three statistical models. A random intercept model was used to examine the variance between intercepts by computing the intraclass correlation coefficient of the criterion measure. An unconditional growth model was used to ascertain whether enough significant inter-individual differences existed in the pattern of peer influence and individual trial, adoption, and continued use of YouTube in order to see if it warranted the need to further examine moderators of peer influence across time. Finally, a conditional growth model was used to test the hypotheses proposed in this study. In this model a total of nine predictor variables were examined in order to evaluate their intercept and slope trajectories across time through the stages of New Media trial, adoption, and continued use. Four of the six hypotheses proposed in this study were supported by the results of this model. The results of these hypotheses were used to answer the research questions investigated throughout this study and revealed that peer influence is in fact moderated by intrinsic personality characteristics across time through the stages of trial, adoption, and continued use.

The research was limited by the sample obtained, the possibility of interviewee apprehension, and unidimensionality of the measures. Future implications resulting from this research include developing an explanatory model that maps the themes, patterns, and associations identified from both the quantitative and qualitative data and conducting a multi-country New Media study. Overall, this study helps fill the gap in existing New Media research by providing an understanding of how peer influence and personality characteristics interact across time through the stages of New Media trial, adoption, and continued use.

Appendix A – IRB Approval with Restrictions

Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
201J University Hall
3640 Col. Glenn Hwy.
Dayton, OH 45435-0001
(937) 775-2425
(937) 775-3781 (FAX)
e-mail: rsp@wright.edu

DATE: October 11, 2010

TO: Anand Jeyaraj, Ph.D., Faculty
Information Systems and Operations management

FROM: Laurel Elder, Ph.D., Chair
WSU Institutional Review Board

SUBJECT: SC#4300
'New Media Innovations: Trial, Adoption, and Usage by Individuals'

The above human subjects study was approved by Expedited Review on the condition that you respond to the review comments. **Please note that the activities covered by this action may ONLY be initiated when all restrictions have been received and accepted.**

In order for us to remove the conditions, please respond by sending a cover letter explaining the additions or changes along with a copy of any revised pages and/or consent document (with changes highlighted) as indicated.

Send your response to Robyn Wilks, Coordinator, Institutional Review Board, 201J University Hall. If you have any questions concerning the condition(s), please contact her at 775-4462.

Thank you!

Enclosures

RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

SC # 4300

ACTION OF THE WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY
EXPEDITED REVIEW
Assurance Number: FWA00002427

Title: 'New Media Innovations: Trial, Adoption, and Usage by Individuals'

Principal Investigator: Anand Jeyaraj, Ph.D., Faculty
Department: Information Systems and Operations management

Expedited Category: 6, 7

The Institutional Review Board has approved the use of human subjects on this proposed project.

REMINDER: FDA regulations require prompt reporting to the IRB of any changes in research activity, changes in approved research during the approval period may not be initiated without IRB review (submission of an amendment), and prompt reporting of any unanticipated problems (adverse events).

B Lamp Ellen, Ph.D.

Signed Chair, WSU-IRB
Expedited Review Date: **October 08, 2010**
IRB Meeting Date: October 18, 2010

This approval is effective only through: **October 8, 2011**
To continue the activities approved under this protocol you should receive the appropriate form (s) from Research and Sponsored Programs (RSP) two to three months prior to the required due date. If you do not receive this notification, please contact RSP at 775-2425.

SC # 4300 PI Name Anand Jeyaraj, Ph.D., Faculty

For Meeting Date 10/08/10 Co-PI Name

PLEASE RESPOND:

***NOTE:** When responding, please highlight the requested changes made to your revised document(s). Unless otherwise noted, only one (1) copy of the requested item (s) needs to be submitted for your response.*

Please be aware that the activities covered by this action may not be initiated until all restrictions have been removed and subsequent final approval has been recommended.

**Recommended for approval provided the following conditions are met:

a. Submission of a revised petition in which the following change has been made:
1. Q# 21: clarify if this should be $25.00
b. Submission of a revised consent form in which the following changes have been made:
1. Describe the compensation (gift card) for the participants in the consent.
2. Paragraph 1: Replace "a faculty member" with "Dr. Anand Jeyaraj". (line 3)
3. Paragraph 2: Describe where the interviews will take place (e.g "at Wright State University").
4. Paragraph 3: Replace "would" with "may". (line 4)
5. Paragraph 5: Correct the RSP phone number to 775-4462.
6. Specifically state in the consent who to contact with questions about the research itself.
c. Submission of a revised flyer in which the following change has been made:
1. Replace "Are you aged between 18 and 25?" with "Are you between 18 and 25 years of age?"
d. Please submit a copy of the list serve message you plan to use for recruitment.
e. Please submit your C.V.

Appendix B – IRB Approval with Restrictions Lifted

Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
201J University Hall
3640 Col. Glenn Hwy.
Dayton, OH 45435-0001
(937) 775-2425
(937) 775-3781 (FAX)
e-mail: rsp@wright.edu

DATE: October 13, 2010

TO: Anand Jeyaraj, Ph.D., Faculty
Information Systems and Operations management

FROM: B. Laurel Elder, Ph.D., Chair
WSU Institutional Review Board

SUBJECT: SC# 4300
'New Media Innovations: Trial, Adoption, and Usage by Individuals'

This memo is to verify the receipt and acceptance of your response to the conditions placed on the above referenced human subjects protocol/amendment.

These conditions were lifted on: 10/13/2010

This study/amendment now has full approval and you are free to begin the research project. If this is a VA proposal, you must still receive a letter of approval from the Research and Development Committee prior to beginning the research project. This implies the following:

1. That this approval is for one year from the approval date shown on the Action Form and if it extends beyond this period a request for an extension is required. (Also see expiration date on the Action Form)

2. That a progress report must be submitted before an extension of the approved one-year period can be granted.

3. That any change in the protocol must be approved by the IRB; otherwise approval is terminated.

If you have any questions concerning the condition(s), please contact Jodi Blacklidge at 775-3974.

Thank you!
Enclosure

RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

SC # 4300

ACTION OF THE WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY
EXPEDITED REVIEW
Assurance Number: FWA00002427

Title: 'New Media Innovations: Trial, Adoption, and Usage by Individuals'

Principal Investigator: Anand Jeyaraj, Ph.D., Faculty
Department: Information Systems and Operations management

Expedited Category: 6, 7

The Institutional Review Board has approved the use of human subjects on this proposed project.

REMINDER: FDA regulations require prompt reporting to the IRB of any changes in research activity, changes in approved research during the approval period may not be initiated without IRB review (submission of an amendment), and prompt reporting of any unanticipated problems (adverse events).

B Lamp Elder Ph. D.

Signed Chair, WSU-IRB
Expedited Review Date: **October 08, 2010**
IRB Meeting Date: October 18, 2010

This approval is effective only through: **October 8, 2011**
To continue the activities approved under this protocol you should receive the appropriate form (s) from Research and Sponsored Programs (RSP) two to three months prior to the required due date. If you do not receive this notification, please contact RSP at 775-2425.

Appendix C – Research Advertisement/Flyer

Appendix D – Self-Reported Screener Survey

(To verify eligibility to participate in research)

1. Do you have your own blog or personal website (this doesn't include your own page on Facebook, MySpace or similar sites)? _____ Yes _____ No

2. In the last month, have you contacted someone through a social networking site like Myspace or Facebook on more than one occasion? _____ Yes _____ No

3. In the last month, have you searched for content on social media sites like YouTube or Flickr on more than one occasion? _____ Yes _____ No

4. In the last month, have you made a purchase, submitted a product review, read product reviews, or researched a product online on more than one occasion? _____ Yes _____ No

5. In a typical week, how many HOURS do you spend performing the following activities?

Contributing to own website or blog	_____	Visiting video sharing sites (YouTube/ Flickr)	_____
Reading blogs or online forums	_____	Searching for and listening to podcasts	_____
Visiting social network sites (MySpace/ Facebook)	_____	Spend playing games online	_____

6. Which one of the following categories best describes your age? _____ 18-21 _____ 22-25

7. Which one of the following best describes your ethnic background?

_____ African American
_____ Caucasian
_____ Hispanic
_____ Asian or Pacific Island
_____ Native American
Other: _____

8. Which one of the following best describes your region or nation of origin?

_____ United States
_____ Middle East
_____ Western Europe
_____ South America
_____ Sub-Saharan Africa
_____ India
_____ China
Other: _____

9. Which one of the following best describes your hometown? Is it:

_____ Urban _____ Suburban _____ Rural

10. What is the Zip code for your hometown city? Zip: _____ City: _____

11. Which of the following categories includes your family's annual total household income before taxes?

_____ Less than $40,000 _____ Between $40,000 and $50,000 _____ More than $50,000

Appendix E – Consent for Participation in Research

CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH

You are invited to participate in a research study on the trial, adoption, and usage of New Media innovations (such as social networking, video sharing, podcasting, blogging, and gaming). The research is being conducted by Dr. Anand Jeyaraj with the Department of Information Systems and Operations Management in the Raj Soin College of Business at Wright State University. You are being asked to participate in the research since you have recently adopted at least one New Media innovation and may be eligible to participate. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have about this research.

The purpose of the research is to understand how individuals trial, adopt, and use New Media innovations. If you participate in this research, you will be required to complete a survey and take part in an interview at Wright State University. During the interview, you will share your *perceptions* of how you made the decision to adopt New Media. You may choose to not answer any questions should you so desire. The survey will take about 15 minutes and the interview will last for about 30 minutes.

Your participation in this research is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect present or future relations with the university. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting that relationship. There are no potential risks to participating in this study. You will receive a $25 gift card as compensation for your time. The research may be beneficial for practitioners as they implement policies for New Media innovations.

Your responses are collected only for the purposes of this research. Interviews are tape-recorded to ensure accuracy of data collection. The audio-tapes are accessible only to the investigators and individuals who may be hired to transcribe the tapes. The transcripts will be available only to the investigators. Audio-tapes will be destroyed after the completion of this research. You are free to turn off the tape-recorder at any time during the interview. To protect your organization as well as yourself, company identities and individual identities remain anonymous throughout this research.

You may ask questions you have now. If you questions about the research, you may contact Dr. Anand Jeyaraj (937-775-2189). If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may call the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at Wright State University (937-775-4462).

_____

Anand Jeyaraj, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, ISOM
Raj Soin College of Business
Wright State University
937-775-2189

I have read the statement above and have had the opportunity to express my concerns, to which the investigator has responded satisfactorily. I have been informed the purpose of the study, the benefits and risks involved, and I agree to be a participant in this study.

_____ _____

Signature (or Initials) of Participant Date

Appendix F – New Media Interview Guide

Name: _____ Gender: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____

NEW MEDIA INNOVATIONS: TRIAL, ADOPTION, AND USAGE BY INDIVIDUALS

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Initially, allow respondent to pick ONE specific technology (e.g., Facebook, YouTube) that falls into any one of the following categories of technologies: blogs, social networking sites, personal web sites, video sharing sites, podcasts, and viral games. Then, ask the following questions with reference to that ONE technology. [Once all questions below are asked and answered, go back to the top and begin the same process for another technology.]

For each question below, allow respondent to first rate the answer on a 7-point scale and then provide a descriptive answer as to the rating.

Technology—

How long (e.g., number of months or years) have you been using the [technology]?

< 1 week 1 month > 1year
1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7

_____ (months)

How often (e.g., once a day, once a week) do you use the [Technology]?

Once a Month Once a day Several times day
1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7

_____ times per _____

How much time (e.g., 5 min, 30 min) do you spend with the [Technology] when you use it?

About 5 minutes About 30 minutes More than 1 hour
1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7

_____ minutes

Awareness—

How did you know about the [Technology]?

>> Did you find it yourself or did someone introduce it to you?

>> If YOURSELF: What is the mechanism (e.g., search, ad) by which you found out?

>> If SOMEONE: Who was it? What did he/she say/do when introducing you to it?

Trial—

When did you first "try" the [Technology] for yourself?

What was your motivation to try the [Technology]?

>> How would you rate experimentation as the reason to try the [Technology]?

Very Low Very High
1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7

>> How would you rate ease of use as the reason to try the [Technology]?

Very Low Very High
1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7

>> How would you rate peer influence as the reason to try the [Technology]?

Very Low Very High
1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7

Did someone talk to you at this time? Did someone help you get started?

Very Few Very Many
1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7

How many features in social networking have you tried?

_____ features or _____% of features

What features (e.g., setup account, send messages) of the [Technology] did you try at this time?

Adoption—

When did you first decide to "adopt" the [Technology] for yourself?

What was your motivation to adopt the [Technology]?

>> How would you rate ease of use as the reason to adopt the [Technology]?	Very Low Very High 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7
>> How would you rate peer influence as the reason to adopt the [Technology]?	Very Low Very High 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7
>> How would you rate technology features as the reason to adopt the [Technology]?	Very Low Very High 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7
>> How would you rate technology content as the reason to adopt the [Technology]?	Very Low Very High 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7

Did someone talk to you at this time? Did someone help you get started?

What features (e.g., setup account, send messages) of the [Technology] did you use this time?

Continued Use—

When did you first decide to "continue using" the [Technology] for yourself?

What was your motivation to continue use of the [Technology]?

>> How would you rate ease of use as the reason to continue using the [Technology]?

Very Low Very High
1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7

>> How would you rate peer influence as the reason to continue using the [Technology]?

Very Low Very High
1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7

>> How would you rate technology features as the reason to continue using the [Technology]?

Very Low Very High
1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7

>> How would you rate technology content as the reason to continue using the [Technology]?

Very Low Very High
1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7

Did someone talk to you at this time? Did someone help you get started?

What features (e.g., setup account, send messages) of the [Technology] did you use this time?

Any other reasons for trialing the [Technology]?

Any other reasons for adopting the [Technology]?

Any other reasons for continuing to use the [Technology]?

NOTES:

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS:

Appendix G – Big Five Factors Personality Survey

SURVEY

Indicate using 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 the extent to which you disagree or agree with each statement below.

Strongly Agree				Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

_____ Am the life of party

_____ Feel little concern for others

_____ Am always prepared

_____ Get stressed out easily

_____ Have a rich vocabulary

_____ Don't talk a lot

_____ Am interested in people

_____ Leave my belongings around

_____ Am relaxed most of the time

_____ Have difficulty understanding abstract ideas

_____ Feel comfortable around people

_____ Insult people

_____ Pay attention to details

_____ Worry about things

_____ Have a vivid imagination

_____ Keep in the background

_____ Sympathize with other's feelings

_____ Make a mess of things

_____ Seldom feel blue

_____ Am not interested in abstract ideas

_____ Start conversations

_____ Am not interested in other people's problems

_____ Get chores done right away

_____ Am easily disturbed

_____ Have excellent ideas

_____ Have little to say

_____ Have a soft heart

_____ Often forget to put things back

_____ Get upset easily

_____ Do not have a good imagination

_____ Talk to a lot of different people at parties

_____ Am not really interested in others

_____ Like order

_____ Change my mood a lot

_____ Am quick to understand things

_____ Don't like to draw attention to myself

_____ Take time for others

_____ Shirk my duties

_____ Have frequent mood swings

_____ Use difficult words

_____ Don't mind being the center of attention

_____ Feel other's emotions

_____ Follow a schedule

_____ Get irritated easily

_____ Spend time reflecting on things

_____ Am quiet around strangers

_____ Make people feel at ease

_____ Am exacting in my work

_____ Often feel blue

_____ Am full of ideas

Appendix H – SDB/SII/Mavenism Personality Survey

SURVEY

Indicate using 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, or 7 the extent to which you believe each statement below is false or true.

Completely True						Completely False
7	6	5	4	3	2	1

_____ I am always willing to admit when I've made a mistake

_____ I like to introduce a new brands, products or services to my friends in technology product categories

_____ I always try to practice what I preach

_____ I like to help people by providing them with information

_____ People often ask me for information to get the best buy, places to shop, or sales on technology products

_____ I never resent being asked to return a favor

_____ If someone asked me where to get the best buy on technology products, I could tell the person where to shop

_____ I have never been bothered when people expressed ideas that were different from my own

_____ My friends think of me as a good source of information for new technology products

_____ Think about a person who has information about a variety of products and likes to share this information with others. This person knows about new products, sales, stores and so on but does not necessarily feel he or she is an expert on any one particular product. How strongly would you agree that this description fits you?

_____ No matter who I'm talking to. I'm always a good listener

_____ I never hesitate to go out of my way to help someone in trouble

_____ It is important that others like the products and brands that I buy

_____ I rarely purchase the latest fashion trends until I know that my friends approve of them.

_____ I often identify with other people by purchasing the same products and brands they purchase

_____ When buying products, I generally purchase these brands that I think others will approve

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Vita

Technical Sergeant Joseph L. Hicks graduated from Craven Community High School in New Bern, North Carolina, he enlisted in the Air Force in February 1998. His first duties in the Air Force were as an Aerospace Propulsion Technician working on B1-B Lancer jet engines in the 7th Component Repair Squadron at Dyess AFB, Texas. While assigned to Dyess AFB, he also served in the Base Honor Guard from 1998-2000. In November 2000, he was selected for a three-year overseas assignment to Misawa Air Base, Japan. While stationed in Japan, he worked in the 35th Maintenance Squadron's Queen Bee Propulsion Flight where he maintained F100-GE-100/129 jet engines for F-16 aircraft assigned to bases in Alaska, Japan, and the Republic of Korea. In June 2003, he earned his Associates Degree in Aircraft Maintenance Systems Technology from the Community College of the Air Force. In July 2003 Sergeant Hicks completed his overseas tour and was reassigned to Langley AFB, Virginia where he maintained F100-PW-100/220 jet engines for F-15C/D aircraft. In June 2006, he graduated Magna cum Laude with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Professional Aeronautics from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. In May 2009, Sergeant Hicks applied and was accepted into the Enlisted-to-AFIT Program where he has worked towards a Master of Science Degree in Information Resource Management from the Air Force Institute of Technology at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio. Sergeant Hicks is married to the former Trixy Watson of Newport, North Carolina. Together they have four children, Bailey Joseph, Sadra Paige, Kylie Morgan, and Carson Dane. Upon graduation, Sergeant Hicks will be assigned to HQ Air Combat Command in the Strategic Integration Branch at Langley AFB, Virginia.

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved
OMB No. 074-0188

1. REPORT DATE *(DD-MM-YYYY)*	**2. REPORT TYPE**	**3. DATES COVERED** *(From – To)*
24-03-2011	**Master's Thesis**	May 2010-Mar 2011

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE

New Media Analysis: The Effects of Peer Influence and Personality Characteristics Through the Stages of Trial, Adoption, and Continued Use of Video Sharing Websites

5a. CONTRACT NUMBER

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14. ABSTRACT

New Media technologies have evolved at a rapid pace and have changed the way people communicate in the digital world. These changes are apparent in practically every type of application, including business, leisure, and the way people socially interact. The primary goal of this research was to contribute to the current breadth of knowledge and understanding regarding how, why, and under what conditions people interact with New Media technologies. In order to achieve this objective, this research provides an understanding of how peer influence and individual personality characteristics interact across time through the stages of New Media trial, adoption, and continued use of video sharing websites. The research methodology involved the collection of quantitative data from 63 university students. Three instruments were used to collect data: self-reported screener survey, semi-structured interview with quantitative items, and a personality survey. A conditional growth model was used to test six hypotheses proposed by this study. The results of these hypotheses revealed that peer influence is in fact moderated by personality characteristics across time through the stages of New Media trial, adoption, and continued use. This research provides a foundation in which to build upon and presents several opportunities for future research.

15. SUBJECT TERMS

New Media, Information Technology , Personality Characteristics, Peer Influence, Video Sharing

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